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Twenty-sixth session
8-26 January 2001

Report on the twenty-sixth session

(Geneva, 8-26 January 2001)

CONTENTS

Chapter		Paragraphs	Page
I.	ORGANIZATIONAL AND OTHER MATTERS	1 - 17	4
	A. States parties to the Convention	1 - 3	4
	B. Opening and duration of the session	4	4
	C. Membership and attendance	5 - 8	4
	D. Agenda	9	5
	E. Meeting with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights	10 - 12	6
	F. Pre-sessional working group	13 - 15	6
	G. Organization of work	16	7
	H. Future regular meetings	17	7

CONTENTS (continued)

Chapter		Paragraphs	Page
II.	REPORTS BY STATES PARTIES UNDER ARTICLE 44 OF THE CONVENTION	18 - 533	7
	A. Submission of reports	18 - 27	7
	B. Consideration of reports	28 - 533	9
	Concluding observations: Latvia	28 - 82	9
	Concluding observations: Liechtenstein	83 - 116	19
	Concluding observations: Ethiopia	117 - 195	24
	Concluding observations: Egypt	196 - 251	36
	Concluding observations: Lithuania	252 - 310	47
	Concluding observations: Lesotho	311 - 374	57
	Concluding observations: Saudi Arabia	375 - 418	71
	Concluding observations: Palau	419 - 481	79
	Concluding observations: Dominican Republic	482 - 533	91
III.	INTER-SESSIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMITTEE	534 - 553	101
IV.	COOPERATION WITH UNITED NATIONS AND OTHER COMPETENT BODIES	554 - 573	103
V.	FUTURE THEMATIC DEBATE	574	107
VI.	GENERAL COMMENTS	575	107
VII.	DRAFT PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE TWENTY-SEVENTH SESSION	576	107
VIII.	ADOPTION OF THE REPORT	577	107

Annexes

		Page
I.	States which have ratified or acceded to the Convention on the Rights of the Child as at 26 January 2001	108
II.	States which have signed or ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict as at 26 January 2001	114
III.	States which have signed or ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography as at 26 January 2001	117
IV.	Membership of the Committee on the Rights of the Child	120
V.	Status of submission of reports by States parties under article 44 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child as at 26 January 2001	121
VI.	List of initial and second periodic reports considered by the Committee on the Rights of the Child as at 26 January 2001	137
VII.	Provisional list of reports scheduled for consideration at the Committee's twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth sessions	144
VIII.	Outline for the day of general discussion (28 September 2001) on "Violence against children within the family and at school"	145
IX.	General Comment No. 1 (2001): The aims of education	150
X.	Statement of the Committee on the Rights of the Child to the Second Substantive Session of the Preparatory Committee for the Special Session on Children of the General Assembly	159
XI.	List of documents issued for the twenty-sixth session of the Committee	163

I. ORGANIZATIONAL AND OTHER MATTERS

A. States parties to the Convention

1. As at 26 January 2001, the closing date of the twenty-sixth session of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, there were 191 States parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Convention was adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989 and opened for signature and ratification or accession in New York on 26 January 1990. It entered into force on 2 September 1990, in accordance with the provisions of its article 49. A list of States that have signed, ratified or acceded to the Convention is contained in annex I to the present report.

2. As at 26 January 2001, the closing date of the twenty-sixth session of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Optional Protocol of the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict had been ratified by 3 States parties and signed by 75 States. As at the same date, the Optional Protocol of the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography had been ratified by 1 State party and signed by 69 States. The two Optional Protocols to the Convention were adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 54/263 of 25 May 2000 and opened for signature and ratification or accession in New York on 5 June 2000. A list of States that have signed, ratified or acceded to the two Optional Protocols of the Convention are contained in annexes II and III to the present report.

3. The texts of the declarations, reservations or objections made by States parties with respect to the Convention are reproduced in document CRC/C/2/Rev.8.

B. Opening and duration of the session

4. The Committee on the Rights of the Child held its twenty-sixth session at the United Nations Office at Geneva from 8 to 26 January 2001. The Committee held 28 meetings (670th-697th). An account of the Committee's deliberations at its twenty-sixth session is contained in the relevant summary records (CRC/C/SR.670-677; 679-680; 683-688; 691-694; and 697).

C. Membership and attendance

5. All the members of the Committee attended the twenty-sixth session. A list of the members, together with an indication of the duration of their terms of office, is provided in annex III to the present report. Amina Hamza El Guindi, Marilia Sardenberg and Paolo Fulci were not able to attend the session in its entirety.

6. The following United Nations bodies were represented at the session: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

7. The following specialized agencies were also represented at the session: International Labour Organization (ILO), World Health Organization (WHO).

8. Representatives of the following non-governmental organizations were also in attendance at the session:

General consultative status

International Council of Women, International Movement ATD Fourth World, Zonta International.

Special consultative status

Arab Organization for Human Rights, Amnesty International, Coalition against Trafficking in Women, Defence for Children International, International Commission of Jurists, International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, International Confederation of Social Workers, International Federation of Women in Legal Careers, International Federation Terre des Hommes, International Service for Human Rights, World Federation of Methodist and Uniting Church Women, World Organization against Torture. Amnesty International, NGO Working Group for Nutrition, International Baby Food Network (IFBAN).

Others

Lesotho NGO Coalition, Federation for the Protection of Children's Rights, Save the Children (Latvia), Save the Children (Sweden), Save the Children (United Kingdom), NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child, United Generations.

D. Agenda

9. At the 670th meeting, on 8 January 2001, the Committee adopted the following agenda on the basis of the provisional agenda (CRC/C/101):

1. Adoption of the agenda.

2. Organizational matters.

3. Submission of reports by States parties.

4. Consideration of reports of States parties.

5. Cooperation with other United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and other competent bodies.

6. Methods of work of the Committee.

7. General comments.

8. Future meetings.

9. Other matters.

E. Meeting with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

10. At the 673rd meeting, held on 10 January 2001, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights addressed the Committee.

11. Mrs. Robinson informed the Committee about recent developments in connection with two major United Nations events of specific significance during the year 2001: the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, which will take place in Durban, South Africa (31 August - 7 September 2001) and the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Children which will be held in New York (19-21 September 2001). She explained that children would be an important focus of attention at the World Conference since they are, all too often, vulnerable targets of discrimination and exclusion. The High Commissioner affirmed that children have a lot to contribute to a shared vision of an inclusive, non-discriminatory world because they have open minds and lack prejudice. She intended to involve children and young people closely in the World Conference and to that end she would write to Ministers of Education to seek support at the national level for the involvement of young people in the World Conference. She welcomed the fact that all human rights treaty bodies, including the Committee on the Rights of the Child, were actively participating in the preparatory process for the World Conference and making a qualitative input.

12. The High Commissioner also welcomed the fact that the Committee was in the process of adopting its general comment on article 29.1 of the Convention and that resources had been made available to the Committee under the Plan of Action for Child Rights to facilitate the drafting process of this general comment. She reminded the Committee that the Plan of Action was giving specific attention to the issue of the administration of juvenile justice and that, within the framework of the United Nations Coordination Panel on Technical Assistance and Advice in Juvenile Justice, her Office had organized in November 2000 a national strategy development seminar in Uganda. Finally, Mrs. Robinson informed the Committee about the entry into force on 22 December 2000 of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and updated the Committee about the ratification status of the two new Optional Protocols under the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

F. Pre-sessional working group

13. In accordance with a decision of the Committee at its first session, a pre-sessional working group met in Geneva from 9-13 October 2000. All the members except Mr. Fulci and Mrs. El Guindi participated in the working group. Representatives of OHCHR, ILO, UNICEF, the United Nations Economic and Social Council (UNESCO), UNHCR and WHO also participated. A representative of the NGO Group for the Convention of the Rights of the Child, as well as representatives from various national and international non-governmental organizations, also attended.

14. The purpose of the pre-sessional working group is to facilitate the Committee's work under articles 44 and 45 of the Convention, primarily by reviewing State party reports and identifying in advance the main questions that would need to be discussed with the representatives of the reporting States. It also provides an opportunity to consider questions relating to technical assistance and international cooperation.

15. Members of the Committee elected Esther Margaret Queen Mokhuane, Lily Rilantono and Gassan Rabah to chair the pre-sessional working group. The latter held eight meetings, at which it examined lists of issues put before it by members of the Committee relating to the initial reports of seven countries (Latvia, Lithuania, Saudi Arabia, Lesotho, Dominican Republic, Liechtenstein and Palau) and the second periodic reports of two countries (Egypt and Ethiopia). The lists of issues were transmitted to the Permanent Missions of the States concerned with a note requesting written answers to the issues raised in the list, if possible before 1 December 2000.

G. Organization of work

16. The Committee considered the organization of work at its 670th meeting, on 8 January 2001. The Committee had before it the draft programme of work for the twenty-sixth session, prepared by the Secretary-General in consultation with the Chairperson of the Committee, and the report of the Committee on its twenty-fifth session (CRC/C/100).

H. Future regular meetings

17. The Committee noted that its twenty-seventh session would take place from 21 May to 8 June 2001 and that its pre-sessional working group for the twenty-eighth session would meet from 11 to 15 June 2001.

II. REPORTS BY STATES PARTIES UNDER ARTICLE 44 OF THE CONVENTION

A. Submission of reports

18. The Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Notes by the Secretary-General on initial reports by States parties due in 1992 (CRC/C/3), 1993 (CRC/C/8/Rev.3), 1994 (CRC/C/11/Rev.3), 1995 (CRC/C/28), 1996 (CRC/C/41), 1997 (CRC/C/51), 1998 (CRC/C/61) and 1999 (CRC/C/78); and on periodic reports of States parties due in 1997 (CRC/C/65), 1998 (CRC/C/70), 1999 (CRC/C/83), 2000 (CRC/C/93) and 2001 (CRC/C/104);

(b) Note by the Secretary-General on the States parties to the Convention and the status of submission of reports (CRC/C/102);

(c) Note by the Secretary-General on the follow-up to the consideration of initial reports by States parties to the Convention (CRC/C/27/Rev.11);

(d) Note by the Secretary-General on areas in which the need for technical advice and advisory services has been identified in the light of the observations adopted by the Committee (CRC/C/40/Rev.17).

19. The Committee was informed that, in addition to the nine reports that were scheduled for consideration by the Committee at its current session and those which had been received prior to the Committee's twenty-sixth session (see CRC/C/100, para. 16), the Secretary-General had received the initial reports of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (CRC/C/28/Add.18) and Niger (CRC/C/3/Add.29/Rev.1).

20. A list of initial reports considered by the Committee as of 26 January 2001, as well as a provisional list of initial and second periodic reports scheduled for consideration at the Committee's twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh sessions, are contained in annexes VI and VII respectively.

21. As at 28 January 2001, the Committee had received 155 initial and 43 periodic reports. A total of 146 reports (131 initial and 15 second periodic) have been examined by the Committee (see annex VIII).

22. In a letter dated 8 November 2000 addressed to the Chairperson of the Committee on the Rights of the Child referring to a letter sent by the Committee on 11 October 2000 to the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, a copy of which was shared with the Israeli authorities, the Permanent Mission of Israel addressed the issue of the violence in the occupied territories and Israel and its effect on children.

23. In a note verbale dated 5 October 2000 addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations referring to the report submitted by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, which contains an addendum entitled "Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland" (CRC/C/41/Add.9), the Government of Argentina stated that it rejects the extension of the application of the Convention on the Rights of the Child to the Falkland Islands ("Malvinas Islands"). As requested by the Argentine authorities, all States parties to the Convention were notified by the Secretary-General about this communication (Reference: C.N.1003.2000.TREATIES-1). In a communication received on 20 December 2000, the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland rejected the claims made by the Government of Argentina referred to in the aforementioned note verbale. All States parties to the Convention were notified by the Secretary-General about this communication (Reference: C.N.1416.2000.TREATIES-2).

24. At its twenty-sixth session, the Committee examined initial and periodic reports submitted by nine States parties under article 44 of the Convention. It devoted 18 of its 28 meetings to the consideration of reports (see CRC/C/SR.671-677, 679-680; 683-688 and 691-694).

25. The following reports, listed in the order in which they were received by the Secretary-General, were before the Committee at its twenty-sixth session: Latvia (CRC/C/11/Add.22); Liechtenstein (CRC/C/61/Add.1), Ethiopia (CRC/C/70/Add.7), Egypt (CRC/C/65/Add.19), Lithuania (CRC/C/11/Add.21), Lesotho (CRC/C/11/Add.20), Saudi Arabia (CRC/C/61/Add.2), Palau (CRC/C/51/Add.3) and the Dominican Republic (CRC/C/8/Add.40).

26. In accordance with rule 68 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Committee, representatives of all the reporting States were invited to attend the meetings of the Committee at which their reports were examined.

27. The following sections, arranged on a country-by-country basis according to the sequence followed by the Committee in its consideration of the reports, contain concluding observations reflecting the main points of discussion and indicating, where necessary, issues that require specific follow-up. More detailed information is contained in the report submitted by the States parties and in the summary records of the relevant meetings of the Committee.

B. Consideration of reports

Latvia

28. The Committee considered the initial report of Latvia (CRC/C/11/Add.22), received on 25 November 1998, at its 671st and 672nd meetings (see CRC/C/SR.671 and 672), held on 9 January 2001, and adopted* the following concluding observations.

A. Introduction

29. The Committee welcomes the submission of the State party's initial report and the written replies to its list of issues (CRC/C/Q/LAT/1). The Committee notes with appreciation the broad ranging delegation sent by the State party and welcomes the frank discussion and the positive reactions to the suggestions and recommendations made during the discussion.

B. Positive aspects

30. The Committee welcomes the recent adoption of new laws, as well as the amendments to the domestic legislation with a view to bringing it into conformity with the principles and provisions of the Convention. In particular, it welcomes the amendment of 1998 of the Citizenship Law according to which all children born in Latvia since 1991 are automatically entitled to citizenship. It also takes note with appreciation of, inter alia, the Law on the Protection of the Rights of the Child of 1998 and the Law on Custody and Local Courts of 1995.

31. The Committee notes the establishment in 1998 of the Commission for the Protection of Children's Rights at the Cabinet of Ministers, in 1996 of the Sub-Commission for the Protection of Children's Rights within the Parliament, in 1995 of the National Centre for the Rights of the Child within the Ministry of Education and Science, which was revised in 1998, and in 1995 of Custody Courts dealing with the protection of the rights of children in relations with their parents and third parties.

32. The Committee notes with appreciation the National Programme for Preventing Sexual Violence against Children for 2000-2004 and the 1999 programme of the Ministry of the Interior for the elimination of child crime and the protection of children against criminal offences.

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* At the 697th meeting, held on 26 January 2001.

C. Factors and difficulties impeding the implementation of the Convention

33. The Committee acknowledges that the economic and social difficulties facing the State party, including increased unemployment and poverty, caused mainly by the transition to a market economy, have had a negative impact on the situation of children and have impeded and are still impeding the full implementation of the Convention.

D. Subjects of concern and recommendations

1. General measures of implementation

Legislation

34. While noting that the Law on the Protection of the Rights of the Child of 1998 reflects some principles and provisions of the Convention, the Committee nevertheless remains concerned that other relevant laws, inter alia some outdated provisions regarding family and adoption in the 1937 Civil Law, are not in full conformity with the Convention and that disparities exist between law and practice.

35. The Committee recommends that the State party continue its efforts in the field of law reform to ensure that its legislation is fully compatible with the provisions and principles of the Convention and with a child-rights approach, and that it take effective steps to ensure that these measures are fully implemented.

Coordination

36. The Committee notes with appreciation the establishment of the National Centre for the Rights of the Child and its role in coordinating the work of State and municipal institutions on issues regarding the protection of children's rights, but remains concerned whether the Centre has the capacity to perform this important role in a satisfying manner.

37. The Committee recommends that the State party provide the National Centre for the Rights of the Child with the financial and human resources necessary to enable it to coordinate effectively the various activities related to the implementation of the Convention at the national level and between the central Government and the local administration level.

Allocation of budgetary resources

38. In light of article 4 of the Convention, the Committee expresses its concern that not enough attention has been paid to allocating adequate budgetary resources for the implementation of existing child rights legislation, in particular to local governments, and that policies related to children are not clear priorities in the State budget.

39. Also in light of article 4 of the Convention, the Committee encourages the State party to identify clearly its priorities with respect to child rights issues in order to ensure that funds are allocated to the maximum extent of available resources for the full

implementation of the economic, social and cultural rights of children, in particular to local governments and for children belonging to the most vulnerable groups in society. It further recommends that the State party identify the amount and proportion of its budget that is spent on children at the national and local levels in order to be able to evaluate the impact of the expenditures on children.

Independent monitoring structures

40. The Committee emphasizes the importance of setting up an independent mechanism with a mandate to monitor and evaluate progress in the implementation of the Convention, both at the national and the local level, and notes that the State party has started to take steps in this direction.

41. The Committee encourages the State party to continue working towards the establishment of an independent body easily accessible to children, such as an ombudsperson for children or a national commission for children's rights, established in accordance with the Paris Principles (General Assembly resolution 48/134), to monitor the implementation of the Convention and to deal in an expeditious and efficient way with individual complaints concerning children's rights. In this regard, the Committee further recommends that the State party consider seeking technical assistance from UNICEF, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), among others.

Data collection

42. The Committee expresses its concern at the fact that a systematic and comprehensive system for the collection of disaggregated data for all areas covered by the Convention and in relation to all groups of children is not yet fully developed.

43. The Committee recommends that the State party continue to develop a system of data collection and indicators consistent with the Convention. This system should cover all children up to the age of 18 years, with specific emphasis on those who are particularly vulnerable, including child victims of abuse, neglect, or ill-treatment; children with disabilities; non-citizen children; children belonging to minorities; children in conflict with the law; children who work; adopted children and children living in the streets and in rural areas. It further encourages the State party to use these indicators and data in the formulation of policies and programmes for the effective implementation of the Convention.

Dissemination of the principles and provisions of the Convention

44. While noting the efforts of the State party in disseminating information about the Convention, the Committee is concerned that the principles and provisions of the Convention are not disseminated at all levels of society, and in particular in the rural areas.

45. The Committee recommends that the State party develop more creative methods to promote the Convention, including through audiovisual aids such as picture books and posters. The Committee also recommends adequate and systematic training and/or sensitization of professional groups working with and for children, such as judges, lawyers, law enforcement personnel, teachers, school administrators and health personnel. The State party is encouraged to fully integrate the Convention into the curricula at all levels of the educational system.

Civil society

46. The Committee notes with concern that the participation and involvement of relevant non-governmental organizations and of civil society at large in the formulation and implementations of policies and programmes relating to children is not systematic.

47. The Committee emphasizes the important role civil society and non-governmental organizations in particular play as partners in implementing the provisions of the Convention, and recommends that the State party consider a methodical approach to involving civil society, especially children's associations and advocacy groups, throughout all stages of the implementation of the Convention, including policy-making.

2. General principles

General principles

48. The Committee is concerned that the principles of non-discrimination (art. 2 of the Convention), best interests of the child (art. 3) and respect for the views of the child (art. 12) are not fully reflected in the State party's legislation and administrative and judicial decisions, as well as in policies and programmes relevant to children at both national and local levels.

49. The Committee recommends that the general principles of the Convention, in particular the provisions of its articles 2, 3 and 12, be appropriately integrated in all relevant legislation concerning children and applied in all political, judicial and administrative decisions and in projects, programmes and services which have an impact on all children, including non-citizen children, and guide the determination of policy-making at every level and actions taken by social and health welfare institutions, courts of law and administrative authorities.

Non-discrimination

50. The Committee is concerned that the principle of non-discrimination is not fully implemented for non-citizen children, children belonging to minorities, including Roma children, poor or dysfunctional families, children with disabilities and children living in rural areas, especially with regard to their access to adequate health and educational facilities. In this context, it notes with interest the State programme for the improvement of the condition of children in the country for 1999. It further takes note with concern of the requirement to record ethnic origin in passports.

51. The Committee recommends that the State party collect disaggregated data to enable monitoring of discrimination against all children, in particular those belonging to the above-mentioned vulnerable groups, with a view to developing measures to put an end to any form of discrimination. It further reiterates the recommendation of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination to reconsider the requirement to record ethnic origin in passports (A/54/18, para. 407).

3. Civil rights and freedoms

Right to nationality

52. The Committee is deeply concerned that, although all children born in Latvia after 1991 are automatically entitled to citizenship according to the amendment of 1998 of the Citizenship Law, there is still a large number of children who are without Latvian nationality. Further it expresses its concern at the slow pace in general of the process of naturalization of non-citizens in Latvia.

53. In light of article 7 of the Convention, the Committee concurs with the recommendation of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination to streamline the process of naturalization for all those who apply for citizenship (A/54/18, para. 404) and, in particular, it encourages the State party to provide more information and support to the parents of non-citizen children to enable them to apply for citizenship on behalf of their children.

Corporal punishment

54. While noting that the Law on the Protection of the Rights of the Child of 1998 explicitly prohibits corporal punishment, the Committee expresses its concern at the still widespread use of corporal punishment, in particular within the family and in school and other institutions.

55. In light of articles 19 and 28 (2) of the Convention, the Committee encourages the State party to develop measures to raise awareness on the harmful effects of corporal punishment and to promote alternative forms of discipline in families, to be administered in a manner consistent with the child's dignity and in conformity with the Convention. It also recommends the effective enforcement of the ban on corporal punishment in school and other institutions.

4. Family environment and alternative care

Children living in institutions

56. The Committee expresses its concern at the high number of children living in institutions, due mainly to the fact that children living in vulnerable families or with a very low income cannot be supported because of the lack of alternative care and of social assistance.

57. In light of articles 18 and 26 of the Convention, the Committee encourages the State party to develop comprehensive measures to support vulnerable families with a view to assisting them in their child-rearing responsibilities, for instance by increasing various forms of social assistance to families or by securing child-care services and facilities to help them with their child-rearing.

Child abuse and neglect

58. While noting the National Programme for the Prevention of Sexual Violence for 2000-2004, the Committee expresses its concern about the lack of data, appropriate measures and mechanisms and resources to prevent and combat domestic violence, including child sexual abuse. Further, child victims do not have the right to free legal assistance and the judicial procedure is not child-friendly, in particular because the child victims are subjected to repeated questioning.

59. In light of article 19 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party undertake studies on domestic violence, ill-treatment and abuse, including sexual abuse, to understand the extent, scope and nature of these practices, adopt adequate measures and policies, and contribute to changing attitudes. The Committee also recommends that cases of domestic violence and ill-treatment and abuse of children, including sexual abuse within the family, be properly investigated within a child-friendly inquiry and judicial procedure in order to ensure better protection of child victims, including the protection of their right to privacy. Measures should also be taken to provide support services to children in legal proceedings and for the physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of the victims of rape, abuse, neglect, ill-treatment and violence, in accordance with article 39 of the Convention.

Adoption

60. The Committee expresses its concern at the fact that the current legislation regulating adoption is out of date and does not guarantee adequate protection of the child involved, as recognized in the Convention. Further, as the procedures for adoption, in particular intercountry adoption, are complicated and as there is virtually no foster system available, it notes that a significant number of children are obliged to live in orphanages and institutions for long periods.

61. In light of article 21 and other related provisions of the Convention, the Committee encourages the State party to adopt the new legislation regarding adoption in order to simplify and expedite the procedures for adoption. Further, it recommends that the State party undertake measures to facilitate the creation of a foster care system with sufficient financial support. It also encourages the State party to continue the process for the ratification of the Hague Convention on the Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption of 1993.

5. Basic health and welfare

Health and health services

62. While noting that the State party started a process focusing on preventive health care, the Committee is concerned that the situation of maternal, child and reproductive health is poor. In particular, it notes with concern the high rates of infant mortality, even though it has been decreasing in recent years, and of child morbidity, in particular the high incidence of tick-induced encephalitis and diphtheria. It also takes note that the immunization programme has been delayed because sufficient funds were not available and that it is no longer available in schools.

63. The Committee recommends that the State party allocate appropriate resources and develop comprehensive policies and programmes to improve the health situation of all children, without discrimination. With reference to the immunization programme, the Committee encourages the State party to look to international cooperation for support in the manufacture and procurement of vaccines.

Children with disabilities

64. The Committee expresses its concern about the fact that children with disabilities are granted additional State benefits only up to the age of 16 and that children with disabilities living in rural areas do not have access to the same level of services and medicines as children living in other parts of the country. Further, it is concerned at the high proportion of children with disabilities who are institutionalized. It also notes with concern that the integration of children with disabilities into the normal educational system is problematical owing to the lack of specialized teachers and the fact that schools are not easily accessible for children with motor impairment.

65. The Committee recommends that the State party allocate the necessary resources for programmes and facilities for all children with disabilities up to the age of 18, especially the ones living in rural areas, and develop community-based programmes in order for the children to be able to stay at home with their families. In light of the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (General Assembly resolution 48/96) and the Committee's recommendations adopted at its day of general discussion on "The rights of children with disabilities" (see CRC/C/69), it is also recommended that the State further encourage their integration into the educational system and inclusion into society, including by providing special training to teachers and by making schools more accessible.

Adolescent health

66. The Committee expresses its concern regarding the rise in the number of children and youths using drugs, alcohol and tobacco, the increase in cases of sexually transmitted diseases (SDTs) and HIV/AIDS among youth, and the growing use of abortion as a method of birth control. Further, it notes the limited availability of programmes and services in the area of

adolescent health, including mental health, in particular treatment and rehabilitation programmes for alcohol and drug addiction. It also notes the lack of sufficient prevention and rehabilitation information, especially on reproductive health in the schools.

67. The Committee recommends that the State party increase its efforts to promote adolescent health, including mental health policies, particularly with respect to alcohol consumption, substance abuse and reproductive health, and develop a programme for health education in schools. The Committee further suggests that a comprehensive and multidisciplinary study be undertaken to understand the scope of adolescent health problems, including the negative impact of STDs and HIV/AIDS, in order to be able to develop adequate policies and programmes. It is also recommended that the State party undertake further measures, including the allocation of adequate human and financial resources, to evaluate the effectiveness of training programmes in health education, in particular as regards reproductive health, and to develop youth-friendly counselling, care and rehabilitation facilities that are accessible, without parental consent when this is in the best interests of the child.

Adequate standard of living

68. The Committee expresses its concern at the high proportion of families, in particular those with three or more children, living at the subsistence level and families threatened with eviction because of the effect of the transition to a market economy on the social welfare system as a whole.

69. In light of articles 3, 4, 6, 26 and 27 of the Convention, the Committee encourages the State party to take all appropriate measures to the maximum extent of its available resources, in particular at the local level, to support families in a difficult economic and/or social situation in order to ensure, to the maximum extent possible, the survival and development of all children living in Latvia.

6. Education, leisure and cultural activities

Education

70. The Committee notes with concern the high number of children not attending compulsory primary school. Further, it expresses its concern at the fact that a number of schools in rural areas have been closed and that the quality of education provided in rural areas is inferior to that in urban areas.

71. In light of article 28 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party undertake appropriate measures to ensure regular attendance at schools and the reduction of drop-out, including by continuing the "School is waiting for you" campaign carried out by the National Centre for Protection of Children's Rights to inform society of the need to ensure that all children attend primary school, and to assist local governments in their work to implement regulations on registration of children. Further, it encourages the State party to undertake measures to facilitate the regular attendance at school of children from poor and/or dysfunctional families.

7. Special protection measures

Administration of juvenile justice

72. The Committee is concerned that the juvenile justice system is not fully in compliance with the Convention and that the justice system as a whole is not efficient. In particular, it expresses its concern at reports of juvenile offenders spending long periods in pre-trial detention because the justice system is overloaded. Further, it expresses its concern at cases of juvenile offenders kept in adult prison facilities and that there are no programmes for their rehabilitation and reintegration into society.

73. The Committee recommends that the State party review its law and practices regarding the juvenile justice system in order to bring it into full compliance with the Convention, in particular articles 37, 40 and 39, as well as with other relevant international standards in this area, such as the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (the Beijing Rules) and the United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency (the Riyadh Guidelines), with a view to ensuring child-friendly practices by the police and other levels of the juvenile justice system and the separation of juvenile and adult offenders in prison. In particular, it reminds the State party that juvenile offenders should be dealt with without delay and that pre-trial detention should not be longer than the period prescribed by law and should be used only as a measure of last resort. Alternative measures to detention should be used whenever possible. The Committee recommends that the State party incorporate into its legislation and practices the United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of Their Liberty, in particular to guarantee them access to effective complaints procedures covering all aspects of their treatment, and take appropriate rehabilitative measures to promote the social reintegration of the children involved in the juvenile justice system. Finally, the Committee recommends that the State party seek assistance from, among others, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Centre for International Crime Prevention, the International Network on Juvenile Justice and UNICEF, through the United Nations Coordination Panel on Technical Advice and Assistance on Juvenile Justice.

Sexual exploitation and trafficking

74. The Committee notes with concern that prostitution is rapidly spreading among minors and that the only rehabilitation programmes available are short term.

75. The Committee recommends that the State party implement the National Programme for the Prevention of Sexual Violence for 2000-2004, in particular its rehabilitation and reintegration aspects. Further, it recommends that the State party undertake a study of commercial sexual exploitation and abuse of children in order to understand its scope and causes and to develop programmes for monitoring the problem and to prevent and combat it, taking into account the Agenda for Action adopted at the World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children. In particular, it encourages the State party to prevent the criminalization and stigmatization of the victims.

Children living in the streets

76. The Committee expresses its concern at the significant number of children living in the streets. It notes that even though the Law on the Protection of the Rights of the Child covers children living in the street, no specific mechanisms have been established for its implementation and that assistance to the children living in the streets is generally provided only by non-governmental organizations.

77. The Committee recommends that the State party support existing mechanisms to provide children living in the streets with food, clothing, housing, health care and educational opportunities, including vocational and life-skills training. Moreover, the State party should ensure that these children are provided, whenever necessary, with rehabilitation services for physical, sexual and substance abuse; protection from police brutality; and services for reconciliation with their families.

Children belonging to minority groups

78. The Committee notes with concern that the Education Law of 1998 foresees that, as of 2004, all State-funded schools will provide secondary education in Latvian only, while bilingual education will be available only until 9th grade. Further, it notes the slow pace of the National Programme for Integration of Society in Latvia, owing in particular to a lack of funding.

79. The Committee encourages the State party to ensure that children belonging to minorities can also use their own language in secondary education, in accordance with articles 29 and 30 of the Convention. Further, it encourages the enforcement of the integration process, in particular at community level, and the provision of more information about the process.

Optional protocols

80. The Committee takes note of the fact that the Government of Latvia has started the internal procedure of accession to the Optional Protocols on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and on the involvement of children in armed conflicts.

81. The Committee invites the State party to continue this process and to ratify the two Optional Protocols to the Convention.

8. Dissemination of reports

82. Finally, the Committee recommends that, in light of article 44, paragraph 6, of the Convention, the initial report and written replies presented by the State party be made widely available to the public at large and that the publication of the report be considered, along with the relevant summary records and the concluding observations adopted by the Committee. Such a document should be widely distributed in order to generate debate and awareness of the Convention and its implementation and monitoring within the Government and the general public, including NGOs.

Liechtenstein

83. The Committee considered the initial report of Liechtenstein (CRC/C/61/Add.1), received on 22 September 1998, at its 673rd and 674th meetings (see CRC/C/SR.673 and 674), held on 10 January 2001, and adopted* the following concluding observations.

A. Introduction

84. The Committee welcomes the submission of the State party's initial report in accordance with the guidelines for reporting as well as the written replies to its list of issues (CRC/C/Q/LIE/1) which allowed for a clearer understanding of the situation of children in the State party. The Committee expresses appreciation for the information provided by the delegation during the dialogue.

B. Positive aspects

85. The State party's accessions to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1995), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1999), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1999), and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (2000), and to the European Convention on Human Rights, are considered as positive measures.

86. The Committee welcomes the establishment of the national youth parliament, which strengthens the active participation of young people in societal activities.

87. The Committee notes with appreciation that the State party is hosting a large number of refugees from the Balkan region.

C. Principal subjects of concern and recommendations

1. General measures of implementation

Reservations

88. The Committee welcomes the State party's preparation of legislation that will further facilitate access to Liechtenstein citizenship for stateless persons. In this regard, it further welcomes the intention of the State party to withdraw its reservations to article 7 of the Convention and to accede to the relevant international conventions on statelessness.

89. The Committee encourages the State party to complete the revision of the legislation regarding acquisition of Liechtenstein citizenship as soon as possible, in light of the Convention. Additionally, the Committee encourages the State party to pay special attention to the position of children born in Liechtenstein to stateless parents. In this

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* At the 697th meeting, held on 26 January 2001.

connection, the Committee also recommends that the State party withdraw its reservation to article 7 at the earliest possible opportunity and ratify the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.

90. The Committee is concerned about the reservation made by the State party to article 10 (2) of the Convention as well as the State's policy regarding family reunification. These suggest that the State party has serious difficulties in dealing with applications for the purpose of family reunification in a positive, humane and expeditious manner and without adverse consequences for the applicants.

91. The Committee recommends that the State party take the necessary legal and other measures to establish a practice in the area of family reunification in accordance with the principles and provisions of the Convention. The Committee further encourages the State party to consider the withdrawal of its reservation to article 10 (2) of the Convention.

Legislation

92. The Committee is aware of the current revision of the Youth Act (1979) and notes the efforts of the State party to involve youth in the process. However, it remains concerned that the laws relevant to children are not yet fully in compliance with the principles and provisions of the Convention.

93. The Committee encourages the State party to continue the revision of the Youth Act (1979), with the involvement of children. Additionally, the State party should undertake further legislative review to ensure full compliance with the Convention and its rights-based approach.

Independent monitoring

94. While the Committee notes that the State party publishes annual reports on the implementation of the Convention, it is concerned that there is no mechanism that can independently monitor implementation and address violations of the rights of children.

95. The Committee recommends that the State party establish an independent, child-friendly monitoring mechanism, such as an ombudsperson for children or a national commission for children's rights, in accordance with the Paris Principles (General Assembly Resolution 48/134), to monitor the implementation of the Convention. Such a mechanism should be empowered to investigate and make recommendations regarding violations of the rights of children and other shortcomings in the implementation of the Convention.

Data collection

96. The Committee notes with concern the lack of adequate data-collection mechanisms within the State party to ensure the collection of disaggregated data on all aspects of the Convention and to effectively monitor and evaluate progress achieved and assess the impact of policies adopted with respect to children.

97. The Committee recommends that a comprehensive system of data collection be introduced in Liechtenstein incorporating all the areas covered by the Convention. Such a system should cover all children below the age of 18 years, with specific emphasis on those who are particularly vulnerable.

Cooperation with civil society

98. The Committee is concerned at the limited participation of civil society and non-governmental organizations in the implementation of the Convention, including in the preparation of reports.

99. The Committee encourages the State party to consider more proactive measures to systematically involve civil society and non-governmental organizations in the implementation of the Convention.

Dissemination of the Convention

100. While noting initial efforts to disseminate the Convention, the Committee considers that education for children and training activities for professional groups on children's rights need ongoing attention.

101. The Committee recommends that the State party renew its efforts to disseminate the Convention both to children and to the broader public. It also recommends that the State party undertake systematic education and training programmes on the provisions of the Convention for all professional groups working for and with children, such as judges, lawyers, law enforcement officials, civil servants, teachers, health personnel including psychologists, and social workers.

2. General principles

Non-discrimination

102. While the Committee is aware of the initial measures taken by the State party, it remains concerned about the instances of de facto gender discrimination. Concern is also expressed at incidents of racial hatred that can have a negative effect on the development of children.

103. In light of article 2 and other related articles of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its administrative measures to eliminate de facto discrimination against girls. The Committee further recommends that the State party renew its campaign, held in 1995, against racism, xenophobia and related intolerance with the view, inter alia, to preventing prejudices and hostilities towards foreigners among children and adolescents.

Best interests of the child and respect for the views of the child

104. The Committee is concerned that two general principles of the Convention, as laid down in articles 3 (best interests of the child) and 12 (respect for the views of the child), are not fully applied and duly integrated into the implementation of the policies and programmes of the State party.

105. The Committee recommends that further efforts be made to ensure the implementation of the principles of the best interests of the child and respect for the views of the child. In this connection, particular emphasis should be placed on the right of the child to participate in the family, at school, within other institutions and bodies, such as the Youth Council, and generally in society. The general principles should also be reflected in all policies and programmes relating to children. Awareness-raising among the public at large as well as educational programmes on the implementation of these principles should be reinforced.

3. Family environment and alternative care

Protection from abuse and neglect

106. The Committee notes the special attention given to domestic violence, including the establishment of a State-supported shelter for abused women and their children and a legislative proposal to make expulsion of perpetrators from the home possible. However, the Committee is concerned about the possible under-reporting of abuse of children as well as the fact that medical doctors are exempted from the obligation to report cases of child abuse. In this connection, the Committee also expresses concern regarding the lack of statistical data on physical and sexual abuse of children.

107. In light of, inter alia, articles 19 and 39 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party take effective measures, including reinforcing current multidisciplinary programmes and rehabilitative measures, to prevent and combat abuse and ill-treatment of children within the family and at school. The Committee suggests that the State party reconsider the rule concerning the reporting of cases of child abuse by medical doctors in order to make the reporting system more effective and take other measures to reduce under-reporting of child abuse. Adequate procedures and mechanisms to deal with complaints of child abuse should be reinforced in order to provide children with prompt access to justice and to avoid impunity for the offenders.

4. Basic health and welfare

Adolescent health

108. The Committee notes with interest the comprehensive approach to implementing primary prevention of drug abuse among adolescents, focusing on the development of a strong personal identity together with a positive self-image. However, the Committee remains concerned about the health problems faced by adolescents within the State party.

109. The Committee recommends that the State party continue with and expand to other areas the comprehensive approach of primary prevention, in particular concerning alcohol abuse and also with regard to the possibility of adolescents making independent decisions in health matters that directly affect them. Furthermore, the Committee recommends the State party to continue and strengthen its activities to prevent HIV/AIDS and STDs and teenage pregnancies and to pay special and increased attention to adolescent victims of road accidents.

5. Special measures of protection

Administration of juvenile justice

110. With regard to the administration of juvenile justice, the Committee is concerned about the lack of disaggregated statistics on the types of offences with which minors are generally charged, as well as on the average length of sentences and pre-trial detention. Concern is also expressed regarding the insufficient information concerning the practice and procedure of monitoring the situation of children who, owing to the lack of facilities in the State party, are in detention in Austria.

111. The Committee recommends that the State party pay close attention to the practice of juvenile justice through, inter alia, the systematic collection of disaggregated data and monitoring, particularly with respect to the children in detention in Austria. All additional appropriate measures should be taken to ensure full compatibility with the Convention, especially articles 37, 40 and 39, as well as with other relevant international standards in this area, such as the Beijing Rules, the Riyadh Guidelines and the United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty.

Sexual exploitation and sexual abuse

112. While the Committee is aware that the State party is in the process of amending its legislation against sexual abuse, it is concerned at the lack of information on this social phenomenon.

113. In light of article 34 and other related articles of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party undertake studies with a view to strengthening current policies and measures, including care and rehabilitation, to prevent and combat this phenomenon. The Committee further recommends that the State party complete the enactment of its legislation against sexual exploitation and abuse. The Committee recommends that the State party take into account the recommendations formulated in the Agenda for Action adopted at the 1996 Stockholm World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children.

6. Ratification of the Optional Protocols

114. The Committee is aware that the State party has signed the two Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict and on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

115. The Committee encourages the State party to reinforce its efforts to ratify these instruments.

7. Dissemination of the reports

116. Finally, in light of article 44, paragraph 6, of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the initial report and written replies submitted by the State party be made widely available to the public at large and that the publication of the report be considered, along with the relevant summary records and concluding observations adopted by the Committee. Such a document should be widely distributed in order to generate debate and awareness of the Convention, its implementation and monitoring within the Government, the Parliament and the general public, including concerned non-governmental organizations.

Ethiopia

117. At its 675th and 676th meetings (see CRC/C/SR. 675-676), held on 11 January 2001, the Committee on the Rights of the Child considered the second periodic report of Ethiopia (CRC/C/70/Add.7), which was received on 28 September 1998, and adopted* the following concluding observations.

A. Introduction

118. The Committee welcomes the prompt submission by the State party of its second periodic report, the written answers to the list of issues (CRC/C/Q/ETH/2) and the additional information provided. The Committee notes with appreciation the useful statistical information included in the report and the frank and constructive efforts made by the delegation, led by a high-level representative, to provide additional information in the course of the high quality dialogue.

B. Follow up measures undertaken and progress achieved by the State party

119. The Committee notes the establishment of the Justice and Legal Systems Research Institute, which is contributing to the review of existing national legislation in the light of the standards set by applicable international human rights instruments, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Committee notes, in addition, the recent ratification of ILO Convention No. 138 concerning the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment and No. 182 concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (1999).

120. The Committee notes the State party's adoption of a new Family Code which incorporates many of the principles and provisions of the Convention and amends some aspects of existing legislation which are in contradiction with the Convention, for example, in the context of discrimination against women and girls.

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* At the 697th meeting, held on 26 January 2001.

121. The Committee congratulates the State party on its establishment of an independent Commission on Human Rights and the office of Ombudsman, which will include children's rights within their responsibilities.

122. The Committee notes the interim prohibition by the Ministry of Education of the use of corporal punishment in schools. The Committee notes, also, the establishment of "AIDS awareness clubs" in high schools. The Committee notes, in addition, the establishment of childcare and protection units in 10 police stations in Addis Ababa.

123. The Committee notes the State party's efforts to introduce, as a general policy, a form of systematic child participatory education and that children's rights are included within the curricula of schools.

124. The Committee welcomes the translation, by the State party and NGOs, of the Convention into 11 local languages and other efforts made to publicize the Convention. The Committee notes the many efforts made to raise awareness of the Convention, including through the training of police officers and the use of radio and print media.

125. The Committee notes with appreciation the significant efforts made by the State party to receive and assist large numbers of refugees from neighbouring countries. The Committee notes, further, the recent peace agreement between the State party and Eritrea.

C. Factors and difficulties impeding the implementation of the Convention

126. The Committee notes the continuing incidence of natural disasters, including drought and floods, during the reporting period. The Committee notes also the negative impact upon respect for children's rights of the period of armed conflict with Eritrea.

127. The Committee notes, in addition, the State party's continuing serious socio-economic problems and expresses its concern at the situation of human rights in general.

D. Principal subjects of concern and recommendations

1. General measures of implementation (arts. 4, 42 and 44, para. 6, of the Convention)

128. The Committee expresses its deep concern that many of the concerns it expressed and recommendations it made (CRC/C/15/Add.67) upon consideration of the State party's initial report (CRC/C/8/Add.27) have been insufficiently addressed. The Committee reiterates many of the same concerns and recommendations in the present document.

129. The Committee urges the State party to make every effort to address those of the recommendations contained in concluding observations on the initial report that have not yet been implemented and to address the list of concerns contained in the present concluding observations on the second periodic report.

Legislation

130. The Committee is concerned at the failure to enforce legislation which would serve to protect the rights of children, including: with regard to harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation, early and forced marriage and discrimination against children with disabilities. The Committee is concerned, further, that domestic law is not yet fully compatible with the provisions and principles of the Convention, that the process of drafting and adopting new legislation is slow and that, in addition, some customary practices which are prejudicial to children's rights may still be applied instead of modern domestic legal provisions. The Committee is concerned also that the Convention has yet to be published in the Official Gazette, as recommended in the Committee's concluding observations on the State party's initial report.

131. The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to implement and enforce those aspects of domestic legislation which serve to protect children's rights, giving particular attention to problems of harmful traditional practices, early and forced marriage and discrimination against children with disabilities. The Committee recommends, in addition, that the State party take steps, inter alia through amendment or enactment, to ensure that domestic legislation is fully compatible with the principles and provisions of the Convention and to ensure that new legislation reaches the adoption stage rapidly. The Committee recommends, further, that the State party make additional efforts to ensure that domestic law is applied in preference to customary practices which may infringe children's rights. The Committee also recommends that the State party publish the Convention in the Official Gazette.

Coordination mechanisms

132. The Committee notes the absence of a government body with the necessary capacity and profile to coordinate and develop State policy with regard to children's rights. The Committee notes, in particular, that the current Department for Children, Youth and Family Affairs, within the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, has insufficient financial and human resources to accomplish its task.

133. The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its institutional capacity to coordinate and implement children's rights policies effectively. The Committee recommends, in particular, that the national-level mechanism with responsibility for coordination and implementation of children's rights policy, currently the Department for Children, Youth and Family Affairs, within the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, be provided with adequate resources to perform its task. The Committee recommends, further, that children's rights committees at the regional, "zonal" and "Woreda" levels be strengthened.

Implementation of studies and policies/allocation of budgetary resources

134. The Committee is concerned that the State party has insufficiently implemented the many recommendations of studies, plans of action and policies focusing on children and their rights. The Committee is concerned, in particular, that the State party has not made adequate budgetary resources available for implementation of the Convention and that some relevant budgets have

decreased since the State party's submission of its initial report. The Committee notes, for example, aspects of the State party's March 1994 Social Policy addressing the special protection requirements of, inter alia, children, which have yet to be implemented. The Committee notes, further, the State party's limited progress in implementing the national plan of action for women and children. In addition, and particularly in the context of high military expenditure, the Committee is deeply concerned that the State party has not sought to implement the Convention to the maximum extent of available resources.

135. The Committee urges the State party to implement recent and current study recommendations, plans of action and policies which reinforce the protection of children's rights. Further, and in the light of article 4, the Committee urges the State party to allocate the maximum amount of available resources to implementation of the Convention.

Monitoring mechanisms

136. While noting that the State party has the position of independent human rights commissioner, with a deputy commissioner for children and women's rights, and an office of ombudsperson for human rights, the Committee remains concerned that these mechanisms are not yet operational.

137. The Committee recommends that the State party proceed with the establishment of independent monitoring mechanisms and give them competence and sufficient resources to address children's rights concerns. The Committee recommends, in particular, that the State party pursue its efforts to ensure the appointment of an independent human rights commissioner, with a deputy commissioner for children's and women's rights, and the establishment of an office of ombudsperson for human rights, including a focus on children's rights.

Data collection

138. The Committee is concerned at the absence of essential data on the implementation of the Convention and the situation of children and that, in this regard, insufficient progress has been made in implementing the recommendations contained in paragraph 26 of its concluding observations on the State party's initial report.

139. The Committee recommends that the State party pursue its efforts to establish a database project, with a view to collecting data relevant to the implementation of the Convention across the country. The Committee recommends, in addition, that data collected cover all children up to the age of 18 and that the data be analysed and used in the elaboration of policies and programmes, as well as for follow-up and evaluation purposes.

Training on the Convention

140. The Committee is preoccupied that, in spite of the State party's efforts, the concerns expressed in paragraph 10 of the Committee's concluding observations on the State party's initial report have not been adequately addressed and that public officials working with or for children, and who have a role in their protection, are insufficiently trained in children's rights.

141. In the light of article 42, the Committee urges the State party to make additional efforts to provide training on the Convention's provisions for professionals, inter alia law officials, teachers, civil servants in ministries with a significant impact on children, child welfare and development professionals and health workers. The Committee recommends that the State party make further efforts to disseminate the Convention, inter alia through the media, in schools, through public information campaigns and through the use of traditional methods and structures at the Woreda level, giving particular attention to persons with low literacy skills and those who do not have access to radios. The Committee recommends that the State party consider seeking technical assistance from UNICEF and OHCHR in this regard.

Cooperation with NGOs

142. The Committee is concerned that the legislation providing a framework for the activities of NGOs is outdated and that cooperation with NGOs is insufficient.

143. Recognizing the progress already made, the Committee recommends that the State party update the legislative framework within which NGOs are registered and function. The Committee also recommends that the State party make greater efforts to strengthen its cooperation with NGOs.

2. Definition of the child (art. 1)

144. The Committee is concerned at the very low legal minimum age of criminal responsibility (9 years). The Committee is also concerned that children aged 15 to 18 are effectively considered to bear the same criminal responsibility as adults, albeit that lesser penalties are applied to them than are applied to adults.

145. The Committee urges the State party to raise the minimum age of criminal responsibility and to ensure that children aged 15 to 18 years are accorded the protection of juvenile justice provisions and are not treated as adults. The Committee recommends that the State party take advantage of the ongoing review of the Penal Code to introduce relevant changes to the law.

3. General principles (arts. 2, 3, 6 and 12)

Non-discrimination

146. While noting the State party's strong non-discrimination constitutional provisions, the Committee is concerned, nevertheless, that children and their families who are members of ethnic groups which are in a minority in a particular region, or which are not in control of the region's administration, face discrimination. The Committee is concerned, in addition, that girls and children with disabilities face extensive discrimination, inter alia, in terms of their access to education. The Committee is concerned, further, that societal discrimination against women and against adults with disabilities limits the opportunities for girls and for children with disabilities to achieve full respect for their rights.

147. The Committee recommends that the State party make appropriate additional efforts to strengthen implementation of the non-discrimination provisions of the Constitution, giving particular attention to the situation of children from ethnic groups which are a minority within a particular province, to girls, to children with disabilities and to discrimination against women. The Committee recommends that the State party seek assistance from UNICEF in this regard.

Life, survival and development

148. The Committee joins the State party in expressing concern at the insufficient respect for children's rights to life, survival and development in the State party (see paragraph 39 of the State party's report).

149. The Committee urges the State party to continue to make every effort to achieve respect for children's rights to life, survival and development, including through improved economic development, strengthening of social infrastructure and efforts to alleviate poverty. The Committee recommends that the State party give special attention to children living in rural areas and to refugee and internally displaced children.

4. Civil rights and freedoms (arts. 7, 8, 13-17 and 37 (a))

Birth registration

150. The Committee joins the State party in expressing deep concern at the very low levels of birth registration in the State party.

151. The Committee recommends that the State party continue and strengthen its ongoing efforts to establish institutional structures, for example through the use of mobile registration centres, in order to ensure full birth registration throughout the country. The Committee recommends, in addition, that information campaigns be used to inform the population of birth registration requirements.

Right to be heard and freedom of expression

152. While noting recent changes to the Family Code providing children with the right to be heard in divorce cases, and the creation of the Children's Forum, the Committee is concerned that children's right to be heard is insufficiently respected, particularly in rural areas. The Committee is concerned, further, that young children and adolescents are not always permitted to express their opinions freely. While noting substantial improvements over the past decade, the Committee remains concerned that a broad range of the human rights of adults are not thoroughly respected and that this situation may create an environment in which the civil rights and freedoms of children are also not fully respected.

153. The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to ensure that children's right to be heard is respected. The Committee recommends, in addition, that the State party make every effort to ensure that the right of children and adolescents to express opinions, including through peaceful demonstrations, is respected and that

appropriate follow-up is given to recommendations of the Children's Forum. The Committee recommends, further, that the State party make additional efforts to guarantee general respect for the human rights of adults. The Committee recommends that the State party seek assistance from UNICEF in this regard.

Corporal punishment

154. While noting the Ministry of Education's interim measures prohibiting the use of corporal punishment in schools, the Committee remains concerned that, in practice, corporal punishment remains common in schools and in the context of the family.

155. In the light of article 28.2 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party permanently prohibit all forms of corporal punishment, including in the context of school and the family, inter alia, through the enforcement of appropriate legislation, through awareness raising activities for parents, teachers and other relevant groups and through the training of teachers in alternative disciplinary sanctions which are not harmful to children. The Committee recommends that, for this purpose, the State party consider taking advantage of the current drafting of a new penal code. The Committee recommends, in addition, that children be provided with mechanisms through which they can report and complain of corporal punishment practices.

5. Family environment and alternative care (arts. 5, 18 (paras. 1-2), 9-11, 19-21, 25, 27 (para. 4) and 39)

Family unity and standard of living

156. While recognizing the State party's ongoing poverty alleviation efforts, the Committee remains concerned that many families are under pressure as a result of population displacement, armed conflict, drought, poverty and illness. The Committee is concerned, in addition, at the continuing practice of early and forced marriage of children, and of girls in particular.

157. The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen and fully implement its poverty alleviation programme and develop programmes to strengthen family unity, providing assistance to displaced populations and to very poor communities in particular. The Committee also recommends that every effort be made to ensure that provisions in the new Family Code which raise the minimum age for marriage of both girls and boys to 18 are respected in practice and that forced marriages are prevented.

Family reunification

158. The Committee is concerned that, in the context of population displacement caused by natural disasters or armed conflict, many children have been separated from their families.

159. The Committee recommends that the State party continue and strengthen its efforts to ensure family reunification, and that assistance be sought from UNICEF and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in this regard.

Adoption

160. The Committee is concerned that children in the State party may be vulnerable to abuses of their rights in the context of adoption, including intercountry adoption.

161. In the light of article 21 and other relevant provisions of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party take further steps, through domestic law and implementation procedures, to protect and promote the rights of children in the context of adoption and to consider acceding to the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption.

Violence against women; child abuse

162. The Committee is concerned that violence against women in the context of the family remains widespread and continues to have a negative impact on children. The Committee is concerned, in particular, that domestic violence against women may lead to child abuse in the family.

163. The Committee recommends that the State party make further efforts to address and condemn violence against women, including in the context of the family. The Committee recommends that the State party take steps to monitor and address any incidence of violence and sexual or other abuse against children.

Separation of parents; child custody and child maintenance payments

164. While noting the very positive changes made to the Family Code, which, inter alia, establish fathers and mothers on a more equal legal base in the context of family separation than was previously the case, the Committee remains concerned that traditional and discriminatory practices may continue in spite of the new legislation.

165. The Committee recommends that the State party make every effort to ensure that the provisions of the new Family Code are known by the population and respected and implemented in practice, and that structures are put in place to empower parents and children to claim child maintenance payments.

Alternative care

166. The Committee is concerned at the predominant use of institutional responses to provide assistance to children in difficulty and that children who are cared for in institutions for many years, and until the age of 18, are not given the educational and vocational skills necessary for them to make an independent living once they leave the institution.

167. While urging the State party to avoid recourse to the institutionalization of children as a form of alternative care, the Committee recommends that the State party ensure that children cared for by State or private institutions are given all the assistance they need, including an education and suitable vocational training, to enable them to establish a life for themselves after leaving the institution.

6. Basic health and welfare (arts. 6, 18 (para. 3), 23, 24, 26, 27 (paras. 1-3))

Health standards

168. The Committee is deeply concerned at the extremely high infant mortality rates and low life expectancy in the State party. The Committee is concerned, in particular, at the high incidence of malaria and tuberculosis and their effects upon children, at the fragile health infrastructure, limited health awareness among the public and the limited implementation of the 1993 Health Policy and the 1994 Social Policy. The Committee is deeply concerned that implementation of health policies has been slow and that only limited progress has been achieved in this area.

169. The Committee urges the State party to ensure that access to primary health care services is increased, that national health infrastructure is strengthened and that public health education programmes are used to lower infant mortality rates and raise life expectancy in the State party. The Committee recommends that the State party seek assistance from the World Health Organization, UNICEF and the United Nations Development Programme in this regard.

Social services

170. The Committee is concerned at the continuing absence of social welfare services, in spite of provisions contained in the 1994 Social Policy.

171. The Committee recommends that the State party make further efforts to implement the provisions of its 1994 Social Policy, and that the Policy be updated to take into account current circumstances.

Children with disabilities

172. The Committee is concerned at the relative absence of information on the situation of children with disabilities in the State party and the absence of programmes in favour of children with disabilities.

173. The Committee recommends that the State party urgently gather disaggregated data on the numbers and situation of children with disabilities in Ethiopia, and make greater efforts to ensure respect for their rights.

HIV/AIDS

174. The Committee is concerned at the large number of children with HIV/AIDS or who are affected by the HIV/AIDS-related illness or death of their parents and other family members, and at the need for concerted action by the State party.

175. The Committee urges the State party to make efforts to remain informed of the scale of the HIV/AIDS problem in the country, to reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS and to provide assistance to children with HIV/AIDS and to children whose parents and other

family members have HIV/AIDS. The Committee further recommends that the State party give particular attention to HIV/AIDS orphans and to ensuring that children with HIV/AIDS are not discriminated against. The Committee recommends that the State party make use of educational measures, inter alia.

Adolescent health

176. The Committee is concerned at the insufficient provision for adolescent health care and at the high incidence of early pregnancy in the State party. The Committee is concerned, in addition, at the incidence of sexually transmitted diseases.

177. The Committee recommends that the State party make every effort to improve adolescent health services, to lower the incidence of early pregnancy and to lower the incidence of sexually transmitted diseases through, inter alia, improved reproductive health education and child-friendly counselling services.

Mental health

178. The Committee is concerned that there is inadequate information on mental health related problems, and insufficient mental health care facilities, in the State party.

179. The Committee recommends that the State party make further efforts to gather information on the mental health situation in Ethiopia, to improve mental health services and to increase the numbers of mental health personnel.

Harmful traditional practices

180. Recognizing that there has been some improvement, the Committee, nevertheless, remains deeply concerned at reports from the National Committee on Traditional Practices in Ethiopia (NCTPE) (September 1998) indicating that 72.7 per cent of the female population undergoes some form of female genital mutilation. The Committee is concerned, further, at other practices reported by the NCTPE, including uvulectomy, milk-teeth extraction and forced marriage.

181. The Committee urges the State party to continue and strengthen its current efforts to end practices of female genital mutilation, early and forced marriage and other harmful traditional practices, and recommends that the State party take advantage of the experience gained by other countries.

7. Education, leisure and cultural activities (arts. 28, 29, 31)

Access to education

182. The Committee is deeply concerned at the very low rates of primary and secondary school enrolment, at the especially low rate of enrolment among girls and at the very high drop-out rate. The Committee is concerned, in addition, that insufficient resources among education authorities, schools and parents are having a negative impact on children's enrolment in and completion of primary and secondary school.

183. The Committee recommends that the State party pursue its efforts to increase enrolment, build additional schools, supply better school equipment, improve teacher training and recruit more teachers in order to improve the quality of education, giving particular attention to those regions most in need of such assistance. The Committee recommends that the State party take action to assist with the costs of education, inter alia, school uniforms and fees, for those children with insufficient means. The Committee urges the State party to make every effort to increase the enrolment of girls at both primary and secondary school levels and to ensure that all children enrolled are able to complete their education. The Committee recommends that the State party seek assistance from UNICEF and UNESCO in this regard.

8. Special protection measures (arts. 22, 38, 39, 40, 37 (b)-(d), 32-36)

Children in armed conflict

184. The Committee is concerned by the effect of the recent armed conflict on children, particularly children living in the conflict region.

185. The Committee urges the State party to make every effort to ensure that the recent peace agreement leads to a lasting peace and that children are protected from the effects of armed conflict. The Committee recommends, in particular, that the State party ensure that relevant children's rights concerns are taken into consideration in peace related deliberations and other activities, and that demining efforts are continued. The Committee recommends that the State party seek assistance from UNICEF and the United Nations Mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) in this regard.

Internally displaced and refugee children

186. The Committee is concerned at the difficult situation faced by refugee and internally displaced children and their families in the State party, including in terms of their access to education and health services and in terms of family reunification.

187. The Committee recommends that the State party continue and strengthen its efforts to provide assistance to refugee and internally displaced children and their families, including with regard to education and health services and family reunification and reinstallation. The Committee recommends that the State party continue its cooperation with UNHCR in this regard.

Sexual exploitation, rape, abduction and prostitution

188. The Committee is deeply concerned at reports of sexual exploitation, prostitution, rape and other sexual abuse of children.

189. The Committee urges the State party to address urgently practices of sexual exploitation, rape and other sexual abuse of children through, inter alia, the provision of care to and the rehabilitation and social reintegration of victims, the enforcement of criminal law, the prosecution of perpetrators of these acts and increased monitoring and

reporting of such incidents. The Committee recommends, further, that the State party undertake grassroots awareness campaigns on sexual exploitation and other sexual abuse of children, including the translation of relevant terms into local languages. The Committee also recommends that the State party take into account the recommendations formulated in the Agenda for Action adopted at the World Congress Against Commercial Exploitation of Children, held in Stockholm in 1996.

Children living and/or working on the streets; child labour

190. The Committee is concerned at the large numbers of children living or working on the streets of the main cities in the State party, and at their lack of access to education, health care, essential nutrition and housing. The Committee is also concerned at the numbers of children involved in child labour.

191. The Committee recommends that the State party make urgent efforts to protect the rights of children currently living and/or working on the streets, including through the provision of education, health care, nutritional aid and alternative care assistance. The Committee recommends, in addition, that the State party address the causes of children falling into a situation of street life. The Committee recommends, further, that the State party make efforts to address the incidence of child labour and to respect and implement the provisions of International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No. 182 Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (1999). The Committee recommends that the State party seek assistance from the ILO in this regard.

Juvenile justice

192. The Committee joins with the State party in expressing concern at weaknesses in the administrative and judicial infrastructure (see paragraph 35 of the State party's report). The Committee is concerned, in addition, that there is currently only one juvenile justice court in the country and only one remand home for child offenders, both in the capital city. The Committee notes that adult criminal courts are used to try juvenile cases and is concerned that the full range of protections provided by international juvenile justice standards may not be fully available in such instances. The Committee is further concerned that children are not separated from adults while in detention (see paragraph 31 of the State party's report) and that children aged 15 to 18 may not benefit from all the protections afforded by relevant juvenile justice standards and may, under the current legislation, be sentenced to the death penalty or to life imprisonment.

193. The Committee recommends that the State party conduct a review of its juvenile justice practices with a view to ensuring compliance with the principles and provisions of the Convention and with the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (the Beijing Rules), the United Nations Guidelines on the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency (the Riyadh Guidelines) and the United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of Their Liberty. The Committee also recommends that the State party establish additional juvenile justice courts in different regions of the country. To the extent that adult criminal courts are used to try juveniles, the Committee recommends that judges and other relevant officials be provided with

juvenile justice training. The Committee further recommends that the capacity of correctional facilities to provide for children be increased in order to meet minimum standards defined in international instruments and that the State party implement measures to ensure that children are detained and imprisoned only as a measure of last resort, for the minimum time possible and in separate facilities from those used for adults. The Committee recommends that the Penal Code be amended to ensure that all children, including those aged 15 to 18, benefit from the protections afforded by international juvenile justice standards and to ensure that children under 18 years of age cannot be sentenced to the death penalty or to life imprisonment. The Committee recommends that the State party seek assistance from, inter alia, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Centre for International Crime Prevention, the International Network on Juvenile Justice and UNICEF, through the United Nations Coordination Panel on Technical Advice and Assistance on Juvenile Justice.

Ratification of the two Optional Protocols

194. The Committee recommends that the State party consider ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflicts.

Dissemination of the report, written answers and concluding observations

195. Finally, in the light of article 44, paragraph 6, of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the second periodic report and written replies submitted by the State party be made widely available to the public at large and that publication of the report be considered, along with the relevant summary records and concluding observations adopted thereon by the Committee. Such a document should be widely distributed in order to generate debate and awareness of the Convention and its implementation and monitoring within the Government, the Parliament and the general public, including concerned non-governmental organizations.

Egypt

196. At its 679th and 680th meetings (see CRC/C/SR. 679 and 680), held on 15 January 2001, the Committee on the Rights of the Child considered the second periodic report of Egypt (CRC/C/65/Add.9), which was received on 18 September 1998, and adopted* the following concluding observations.

A. Introduction

197. The Committee notes that the second periodic report was prepared according to the Committee's guidelines for reporting. The Committee regrets, however, that the report is essentially legalistic and does not provide a self-critical evaluation of the prevailing situation of the exercise of children's rights in the country. The Committee appreciates the detailed written

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* At the 697th meeting, held on 26 January 2001.

replies to the list of issues and the provision of additional documentation. It further notes with appreciation the presence of a high-level delegation, which contributed to an open and frank dialogue.

B. Follow-up measures undertaken and progress achieved

198. The Committee welcomes the adoption of the 1996 Children's Code and the declaration of the Second Decade for the Protection and Welfare of the Egyptian Child (2000-2010), which continue to demonstrate the commitment of the State party to realizing its obligations under the Convention.

199. The Committee welcomes the ratification by the State party in 1999 of the Minimum Age Convention (No. 138) of the International Labour Organization.

200. The Committee welcomes the timely submission of the National Report on the Follow-up to the 1990 World Summit for Children, which indicates significant achievements, particularly with respect to infant/child mortality rates and immunization, while acknowledging shortcomings in other areas.

C. Factors and difficulties impeding the implementation of the Convention

201. Noting the universal values of equality and tolerance inherent in Islam, the Committee observes that narrow interpretations of Islamic texts by authorities, particularly in areas relating to family law, are impeding the enjoyment of some human rights protected under the Convention.

D. Principal subjects of concern and recommendations

1. General measures of implementation

Previous concluding observations

202. The Committee is concerned that many of the concerns and recommendations (CRC/C/15/Add.5) it made upon consideration of the State party's initial report (CRC/C/3/Add.6) have been insufficiently addressed. The Committee notes that many of the same concerns and recommendations are made in the present document.

203. The Committee urges the State party to make every effort to address those recommendations from the concluding observations of the initial report that have not yet been implemented and to address the list of concerns contained in the present concluding observations on the second periodic report.

Reservation

204. The Committee observes that the State party's reservation to articles 20 and 21 of the Convention is unnecessary. It points out that article 20 (3) of the Convention expressly

recognizes kafalah of Islamic law as a form of alternative care. Article 21 expressly refers to those States that "recognize and/or permit" the system of adoption, which does not apply to the State party because it does not recognize the system of adoption.

205. The Committee recommends that the State party continue its efforts to consider withdrawal of its reservation to articles 20 and 21 of the Convention, in accordance with the Vienna Declaration and Plan of Action of the World Conference on Human Rights (1993).

Coordination

206. The Committee notes the efforts to improve the effectiveness of the National Council of Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM) in monitoring and coordination to implement the Convention. Nevertheless, the Committee is concerned that administrative coordination and cooperation at the national and local levels of government remain inadequate.

207. The Committee recommends that the State party continue to improve intersectoral coordination and cooperation at and between national and local levels of government. It further recommends that the State party provide adequate support to local authorities, including development of professional capacity, for implementation of the Convention. Moreover, the Committee recommends that the State party pursue the preparation and development of a comprehensive national plan of action to implement its obligations under ratified international human rights treaties, including the Convention, through an open and consultative process, in accordance with the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (para. 71).

Civil society

208. Noting efforts to increase collaboration with non-governmental organizations, including efforts to establish an NGO liaison office in the secretariat of the NCCM, as well as the recent draft legislation on NGOs, the Committee is still concerned that insufficient efforts have been made to involve civil society in the implementation of the Convention.

209. The Committee emphasizes the important role civil society plays as a partner in implementing the provisions of the Convention, including with respect to civil rights and freedoms. The Committee recommends that the State party consider a systematic approach to involving civil society, especially children's associations and advocacy groups, throughout all stages of the implementation of the Convention, including policy-making. In this regard, the Committee recommends that the State party ensure that legislation regulating NGOs conforms to international standards on freedom of association, as a step in facilitating and strengthening their participation. The Committee recommends that greater efforts be made to involve relevant State actors, such as local government officials and the police, in the dialogue with civil society and encourages the State party to support initiatives aimed at strengthening the role of civil society.

Data collection

210. While noting that the analysis of data is an essential function of the NCCM, the Committee is concerned that disaggregated data on persons under 18 years relating to the rights contained in the Convention are not systematically collected by the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics.

211. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that such data are systematically collected and regularly updated so that they can be analysed and used as a basis to assess progress and design policies for the implementation of the Convention. The Committee encourages the State party to seek technical assistance in this regard from, among others, UNICEF, if necessary.

Monitoring

212. The Committee notes that in addition to intersectoral coordination, the NCCM is also the body responsible for monitoring progress in the implementation of the Convention, as well as for receiving complaints pertaining to violations of child rights. The Committee emphasizes the importance of establishing an independent mechanism with a mandate to monitor and evaluate progress achieved in the implementation of the Convention.

213. The Committee encourages the State party to consider the establishment of an independent national human rights institution in accordance with the Paris Principles (General Assembly resolution 48/134) to monitor and evaluate progress in the implementation of the Convention at the national and, if appropriate, at the local levels. In addition, the institution should be empowered to receive and investigate complaints of violations of child rights in a child-friendly manner, and effectively address them. The Committee encourages the State party to seek technical assistance from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and UNICEF, among others.

Dissemination of training on the Convention

214. The Committee is concerned at the low level of awareness among the general public of the Committee's previous concluding observations.

215. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that the concluding observations are widely disseminated not only among government agencies and professionals, but also among the public at large.

216. Noting efforts undertaken by the NCCM to disseminate the provisions of the Convention amongst professionals working with and for children and among the general public, including children themselves, the Committee is nevertheless concerned at the low level of awareness of them and that the State party is not undertaking adequate dissemination and awareness-raising activities in a systematic and targeted manner.

217. The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts in the dissemination of the Convention's provisions and of information regarding its implementation among children and parents, civil society, and all sectors and levels of government. Moreover, the Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to develop systematic and ongoing training programmes on the provisions of the Convention for all professional groups working with and for children (e.g. legislators, judges, lawyers, law enforcement officials, civil servants, local government officials, personnel working in institutions and places of detention for children, teachers, health personnel, including psychologists, and social workers). The Committee encourages the State party to seek technical assistance from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and UNICEF, among others, in this regard.

2. Definition of the child

218. In light of its previous concluding observations, the Committee is concerned at the very low age of criminal responsibility, which is set at 7 years.

219. The Committee recommends that the State party consider raising the age of criminal responsibility.

220. In light of its previous concluding observations, the Committee is concerned that the disparity between the minimum age for marriage for males (18) and females (16) provided in the 1923 Law on Marriage Age is discriminatory. The Committee is also concerned about early and forced marriages, primarily in rural areas.

221. The Committee recommends that the State party raise the minimum age for marriage for females to that for males. In addition, the Committee recommends that the State party continue its efforts in respect of public education campaigns to combat early and forced marriages, particularly in rural areas.

222. The Committee is concerned at the discrepancy between the definition of a child, contained in article 2 of the 1996 Children's Code, as a person under 18 years and the age of majority, set at 21 years in article 44 of the 1948 Civil Law.

223. The Committee recommends that the State party harmonize its legislation in accordance with the Convention in order to avoid the situation where there are effectively two categories of minors: those under 18 years and those between 18 and 20 years of age.

3. General principles

The right to non-discrimination

224. In light of its previous concluding observations, and taking note of the efforts by the State party to address discrimination, including the establishment of a gender unit within the NCCM as well as of the National Council for Women, and of the promulgation of Law No. 1 of 2000

concerning the regulation of certain rules and procedures relating to litigation in cases of personal status law, the Committee remains concerned at the persistence of discrimination. In particular:

(a) The Committee finds that discrimination against girls and children born out of wedlock under personal status laws (e.g. No. 25/1920, No. 25/1929, No. 260/1960, No. 100/1985, No. 77/1943) is incompatible with article 2. Notwithstanding constitutional and other guarantees of equality between the sexes, it considers that discriminatory personal status laws are the entry-point of discrimination against women in society. Moreover, the Committee is concerned that discriminatory social attitudes towards the education of girls, primarily in rural areas, result in their low school enrolment and high drop-out rates, and in early and forced marriages;

(b) The Committee finds that infringement of a child's rights under the Convention as a result of indirect discrimination, or discrimination against his or her mother, under personal status laws (e.g. in relation to child custody upon separation) is incompatible with article 2. Concerning the 1975 Nationality Law, the Committee is concerned at the negative impact on children of restrictions on the right of an Egyptian woman to pass on her nationality to her child, particularly if she is married to a non-national.

225. In accordance with article 2 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party take effective measures, including enacting or rescinding civil and criminal legislation where necessary, to prevent and eliminate discrimination on grounds of sex and birth in all fields of civil, economic, political, social and cultural life. In this regard, the Committee encourages the State party to consider the practice of other States that have been successful in reconciling fundamental rights with Islamic texts. In concurrence with the findings of the Committee on Economic, Cultural and Social Rights (E/C.12/1/Add.4), the Committee recommends that the State party remove all provisions of the Nationality Law which discriminate against women, and also against children. The Committee recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures, such as comprehensive public education campaigns, to prevent and combat negative societal attitudes in this regard, particularly within the family and train members of the legal profession, especially the judiciary, to be gender-sensitive. Religious leaders should be mobilized to support such efforts.

226. In light of its previous concluding observations and taking note of efforts by the State party to combat poverty and its negative effects on children, the Committee remains concerned at the large disparities in the enjoyment of economic and social rights, particularly health and education, by children living in rural areas and regions lagging behind in socio-economic development.

227. **The Committee recommends that the State party take all necessary measures to ensure that all children within its jurisdiction enjoy all the rights set out in the Convention without discrimination, in accordance with article 2. The Committee recommends that the State party prioritize and target resources and social services for children belonging to the most vulnerable groups, especially in areas which lack basic services.**

Best interests of the child

228. The Committee is concerned that in all actions concerning children, the general principle of the best interests of the child contained in article 3 of the Convention is not sufficiently taken into consideration, including in matters relating to family law (e.g. custody upon separation in article 20 of Law No. 25/1929 as amended, is determined by the child's age rather than the child's best interests and is discriminatory).

229. The Committee recommends that the State party review its legislation and administrative measures to ensure that article 3 of the Convention is duly reflected therein and taken into consideration.

Respect for the views of the child

230. Taking note of efforts by the State party, including the convening of a children's parliament, the Committee is concerned that respect for the views of the child remains limited owing to traditional societal attitudes towards children in schools, the courts, and especially within the family.

231. The Committee encourages the State party to promote and facilitate, within the family, the school, the courts and administrative bodies, respect for the views of children and their participation in all matters affecting them, in accordance with article 12 of the Convention. In this regard, the Committee recommends that the State party develop skills-training programmes in community settings for teachers, social workers, and local officials to enable them to assist children to express their informed views and opinions and to have them taken into consideration. The Committee recommends that the State party seek assistance from UNICEF, among others.

4. Family environment and alternative care

Violence/abuse/neglect/maltreatment

232. In light of articles 19 and 39 of the Convention, the Committee is concerned at the incidence of ill-treatment of children in schools despite its prohibition, and within the family. It is further concerned that domestic violence is a problem in Egypt and that this has harmful consequences on children.

233. The Committee recommends that the State party take legislative measures to prohibit all forms of physical and mental violence, including corporal punishment and sexual abuse, against children in the family, the schools, and in care institutions. The Committee recommends that these measures be accompanied by public education campaigns about the negative consequences of ill-treatment of children, and the promotion of positive, non-violent forms of discipline as an alternative to corporal punishment. Programmes for the rehabilitation and reintegration of abused children need to be strengthened. Moreover, adequate procedures and State mechanisms need to be established to: receive complaints in a child-friendly manner; monitor, investigate and prosecute instances of ill-treatment; and ensure that the abused child is not victimized in

legal proceedings. The Committee recommends the training of teachers, law enforcement officials, care workers, judges and health professionals in the identification, reporting and management of cases of ill-treatment. Attention should be given to addressing and overcoming socio-cultural barriers that inhibit victims from seeking assistance. In concurrence with the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Committee recommends that the State party take effective measures to combat domestic violence and criminalize marital rape. The Committee recommends that the State party seek assistance from UNICEF and WHO, among others.

5. Basic health and welfare

Children with disabilities

234. In light of its previous concluding observations, the Committee remains concerned at the situation of children with disabilities and that only a very small percentage receive specialized services.

235. The Committee recommends that the State party review existing policies and practice in relation to children with disabilities, taking due regard of the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (General Assembly resolution 48/96) and of the Committee's recommendations adopted at its day of general discussion on "Children with disabilities" (see CRC/C/69). The Committee recommends that the State party pursue the development of standardized definitions and terminology relating to disabilities for the purposes of collecting comprehensive data on these children. It encourages the State party to make greater efforts to promote community-based rehabilitation programmes and inclusive education; to address geographical disparities in the distribution of services (i.e. in rural areas, and regions such as Upper Egypt); to ensure the provision of services for children under four years, as well as severely mentally disabled children. The Committee encourages the State party to undertake greater efforts to make available the necessary resources and to seek assistance from UNICEF, WHO and relevant NGOs, among others.

Right to health and health care

236. The Committee is concerned at the high incidence of anaemia and parasitic infections among children, particularly in rural areas.

237. The Committee recommends that the State party improve its health infrastructure and continue to cooperate and seek assistance from UNICEF and WHO, among others.

238. The Committee is concerned at the insufficient information available in relation to adolescent health, such as access to reproductive health services, STDs and HIV/AIDS prevention programmes, mental health counselling services and substance abuse education.

239. The Committee recommends that the State party undertake a comprehensive study to understand the nature and extent of adolescent health problems and, with the full participation of adolescents, use this as a basis to formulate adolescent health policies and

programmes. In light of article 24, the Committee recommends that adolescents have access to and be provided with reproductive health education and child-friendly counselling and rehabilitation services. The Committee recommends that the State party seek assistance from UNICEF and WHO among others.

240. Taking note of the Government's 1996 decision to prohibit female genital mutilation and the 1997 ministerial decree banning this practice in Ministry of Health service outlets, as well as various efforts to educate the public about the harm caused by this practice, including campaigns in the media and in the curricula, the Committee is concerned that the practice is still widespread.

241. The Committee, concurring with the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, recommends that the State party address the issue of female genital mutilation as a matter of priority. In addition, the State party is urged to design and implement effective education campaigns to combat traditional and family pressures in favour of this practice, particularly among those who are illiterate.

6. Education, leisure and cultural activities

Aims of education

242. In light of its previous concluding observations and taking note of significant efforts by the State party to improve education coverage, enrolment and retention levels and the inclusion of the Convention in the school curricula, the Committee remains concerned at the poor quality of education in general. The Committee is further concerned at the lack of success of literacy programmes for school dropouts.

243. The Committee encourages the State party to continue its efforts to pursue universal access to education, targeting the girl child and children belonging to the most vulnerable groups. It recommends that the State party undertake a process of curriculum reform which stresses the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills. In relation to the literacy classes, the State party is encouraged to study the reasons for their poor success rates, paying attention, inter alia, to programme content, class scheduling, and negative social perceptions held by young people of such classes. The Committee encourages the State party to seek assistance from UNICEF, UNESCO and relevant NGOs, among others.

7. Special measures of protection

Economic exploitation

244. In light of its previous concluding observations, and taking note of efforts by the State party to address child labour, the Committee remains concerned about this problem. Its main concerns are:

(a) There are insufficient comprehensive and accurate data available on children working in Egypt;

(b) Regulations governing working hours and exposure to hazardous conditions for children are not respected nor effectively enforced. In particular, that there is no effective inspection and supervision in the private sector, family enterprises, agricultural activities and domestic labour, precisely where child labour in Egypt is concentrated, in many cases involving hazardous conditions; and

(c) Eighty per cent of child labour is reportedly concentrated in the agricultural sector. Many of these children work long hours in dusty environments, without masks or respirators, receiving little or no training on safety precautions for work with toxic pesticides and herbicides. Moreover, seasonal work in agriculture is reportedly performed by children under 12 in State-run cooperatives (i.e. cotton pest management) despite this being contrary to the law.

245. The Committee recommends that the State party establish an effective mechanism to collect disaggregated data on child labour, including violations, to serve as a basis for designing measures and evaluating progress in this area. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that the minimum age for admission to employment is enforced. Employers should be required to have, and produce on demand, proof of age of all children working on their premises. The labour inspectorate should be strengthened to ensure effective monitoring and implementation of child labour standards in the private sector, family enterprises, agricultural activities and domestic labour, and it should be empowered to receive and address complaints of violations. The Committee further recommends that the State party continue its efforts to carry out campaigns to inform and sensitize the general public, especially parents and children, of work hazards and to involve and train employers, workers, members of civic organizations, government officials such as labour inspectors and law enforcement officials, and other relevant professionals. The Committee encourages the State party to continue its cooperation with relevant United Nations agencies, such as ILO and UNICEF, and NGOs. It recommends that the State party ratify ILO Convention No. 182 concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

Commercial sexual exploitation

246. The Committee is concerned at the insufficient data and awareness of the phenomenon of commercial sexual exploitation of children in Egypt.

247. The Committee recommends that the State party undertake a national study on the nature and extent of commercial sexual exploitation of children, and that disaggregated data be compiled and kept up to date to serve as a basis for designing measures, and evaluating progress. The Committee recommends that the State party review its legislation and ensure that it criminalizes the sexual exploitation of children and penalizes all offenders involved, whether local or foreign, while ensuring that the child victims are not penalized. The Committee recommends that the State party: ensure that domestic laws concerning the sexual exploitation of children are gender neutral; provide civil remedies in the event of violations; ensure that procedures are simplified so that responses are appropriate, timely, child-friendly and sensitive to victims; include provisions to protect from discrimination and reprisals those who expose violations; and vigorously pursue enforcement. Rehabilitation programmes and shelters should be established for child

victims of sexual abuse and exploitation. There is a need to adequately train personnel working with child victims. The Committee recommends that the State party carry out awareness-raising campaigns to sensitize and mobilize the general public on the child's right to physical and mental integrity and safety from sexual exploitation.

Administration of juvenile justice

248. The Committee is concerned that status offences, such as begging and truancy, under article 96 of the Children's Code are in practice criminalized. Furthermore, the Committee is concerned at the absence of effective, child-friendly and independent complaints mechanisms for juvenile detainees, and that the right to social rehabilitative measures is not adequately guaranteed.

249. The Committee recommends that the State party periodically review and assess the administration of juvenile justice, particularly the conformity of legislation and practice with articles 37, 39 and 40 of the Convention as well as with other relevant international standards in this area, such as the Beijing Rules, the Riyadh Guidelines, the United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty and the Vienna Guidelines for Action on Children in the Criminal Justice System. The Committee recommends that the State party repeal status offences such as begging and truancy; ensure separation of children from adults in pre-trial detention; establish effective independent complaints mechanisms; and develop facilities and programmes for the physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of juveniles. The Committee recommends that the State party seek assistance from, among others, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Centre for International Crime Prevention, the International Network on Juvenile Justice and UNICEF, through the Coordination Panel on Technical Advice and Assistance on Juvenile Justice.

8. Optional Protocols

250. The Committee encourages the State party to ratify and implement the Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, and on the involvement of children in armed conflict.

9. Dissemination of reports

251. Finally, the Committee recommends that, in accordance with article 44, paragraph 6, of the Convention, the second periodic report presented by the State party be made widely available to the public at large and that consideration be given to the publication of the report, along with the written answers to the list of issues raised by the Committee, the relevant summary records of the discussion and the concluding observations adopted by the Committee following its consideration of the report. Such a document should be widely distributed in order to generate debate and awareness of the Convention and its implementation and monitoring within the Government, the Parliament and the general public, including concerned non-governmental organizations.

Lithuania

252. The Committee considered the initial report of Lithuania (CRC/C/11/Add.21), received on 24 November 1998, at its 683rd and 684th meetings (see CRC/C/SR.683 and 684), held on 9 January 2001 and adopted* the following concluding observations.

A. Introduction

253. The Committee welcomes the submission of the State party's initial report and the written replies to its list of issues (CRC/C/Q/LIT/1). The Committee notes with appreciation the high level and multidisciplinary character of the delegation from the State party and welcomes its positive reactions to the suggestions and recommendations made during the discussion.

B. Positive aspects

254. The Committee notes with appreciation the recent adoption of new laws, in particular the new Civil Code, with its new section on "Family Law", adopted in July 2000; the new Penal Code, with its sections on the criminal responsibility of juveniles and on offences against the child and the family, adopted in September 2000; and the Law on the Controller for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (Children's Ombudsman) of the Republic of Lithuania of May 2000. Further, it takes note of the adoption of the Law on the Amendment to the Law on State Benefits to Families with Children of 1997 and the Law on Child Care of 1998.

255. The Committee takes note of the National Service for the Protection of the Rights of the Child established under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour and the Services for the Protection of Children's Rights established in every municipality in Lithuania. Further, it notes the Council for Children's Affairs established under the jurisdiction of the President of the Republic of Lithuania to advise on the various institutions working in the field of child rights.

256. The Committee welcomes the appointment of the Children's Ombudsman who, inter alia, will monitor the implementation of children's rights in accordance with the Convention and investigate the individual complaints of violations of children's rights caused by the acts or omissions of authorities at the national and local levels from non-governmental organizations and individuals.

257. The Committee notes with appreciation the reform of the juvenile justice system and the measures taken to prevent juvenile delinquency in the context of the Programme on Juvenile Justice Reform and the National Programme against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse of Children of 2000.

258. The Committee welcomes the establishment of the Schoolchildren's Parliament in the context of the Year of the Youth, and notes that some of its members are actively collaborating with working groups under the Ministries of Education and Science in the discussions on and preparation of legislation and programmes relating to children and youth.

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* At the 697th meeting, held on 26 January 2001.

C. Factors and difficulties impeding the implementation of the Convention

259. The Committee recognizes that the transition to a market economy after independence in 1991 mainly affected families with children, thus impeding the full implementation of the Convention.

D. Subjects of concern and recommendations

1. General measures of implementation

Legislation

260. The Committee notes that the implementation of some provisions of the Law on the Fundamentals of Protection of the Rights of the Child of the Republic of Lithuania of 1996 required the adoption of new specific laws and is concerned these laws have not yet been enacted.

261. The Committee recommends that the State party expeditiously enact the laws necessary to fully implement the Law on the Fundamentals of Protection of the Rights of the Child of the Republic of Lithuania of 1996. It further encourages the State party to take the necessary steps to ensure that all its legislation is fully in conformity with the principles and provisions of the Convention.

Coordination

262. The Committee is concerned at the absence of a focal point for children within the Government and of mechanisms, both at the central and local levels, for coordinating policies relating to children and for supervising and evaluating the implementation of the Convention. Further, while taking note of the particular structure of the Council for Children's Affairs under the President of the Republic of Lithuania, it expresses its concern that the Council is not being adequately used as a tool to strengthen the implementation of the Convention.

263. The Committee recommends that the State party consider establishing a focal point for children within the Government, which would be in charge of coordinating the work of the various ministries and that of the central and local authorities, in order to establish a better coordinated policy and action for the realization of children's rights, including stronger cooperation with non-governmental organizations. Further, the Committee recommends that the State party use the Council for Children's Affairs as a tool to strengthen the implementation of the Convention.

Allocation of budgetary resources

264. The Committee, while noting that the State party has been taking children's rights into consideration, both at the national and the municipal level, in a more structured way, is nevertheless concerned that a large number of families with children who live in poverty do not have enough support. Further, it notes that child-related programmes are not clear priorities in

the State budget. It also expresses its concern that the appropriate financial and human resources have not yet been allocated for the implementation of the Law on the Fundamentals of Protection of the Rights of the Child of the Republic of Lithuania of 1996.

265. In light of article 4 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that, the State party undertake a study on the impact of the Government's budgetary resources allocated for children and their families in order to assess their effectiveness and to develop a comprehensive strategy to ensure the full implementation of the economic, social and cultural rights of children to the maximum extent of available resources, in particular at the local level and with respect to children belonging to the most vulnerable groups in society. The Committee further encourages the State party to clearly identify its priorities with respect to child rights issues and to identify the amount and proportion of the budget spent on children at the national and local levels in order to evaluate the impact of the expenditures on children. It also recommends that the State party allocate appropriate financial and human resources for the full implementation of the Law on the Fundamentals of Protection of the Rights of the Child of the Republic of Lithuania of 1996.

Data collection

266. The Committee is concerned at the lack of a comprehensive system for the collection of disaggregated data for all areas covered by the Convention and in relation to all groups of children. Such data are needed to monitor and evaluate the progress achieved in the implementation of the policies adopted with respect to children and to assess their impact.

267. The Committee recommends that the State party develop a system of data collection and indicators consistent with the Convention. This system should cover all children up to the age of 18 years, with specific emphasis on those who are particularly vulnerable, including children victims of abuse, neglect, or ill-treatment; children with disabilities; children belonging to minorities; refugee and asylum-seeking children; children in conflict with the law; working children; adopted children; children living in the streets and in rural areas; and missing children. It further encourages the State party to use the indicators and data in the formulation of policies and programmes for the effective implementation of the Convention.

Dissemination of the principles and provisions of the Convention

268. The Committee, while acknowledging the efforts of the State party in training professionals working with and for children, nevertheless notes with concern that the principles and provisions of the Convention are not disseminated at all levels of society, notably in rural areas and among children.

269. In light of article 42, the Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to develop more creative methods to promote the Convention, including through audiovisual aids, such as picture books and posters, at all levels of society and in particular for children. The Committee also recommends that the State party continue in its efforts to provide adequate and systematic training and/or sensitization of professionals groups

working with and for children such as judges, lawyers, law enforcement personnel, teachers, school administrators and health personnel. The State party is encouraged to fully integrate the Convention into the curricula at all levels of the educational system.

2. General principles

General principles

270. The Committee is concerned that the principles of non-discrimination (art. 2 of the Convention), best interests of the child (art. 3) and respect for the views of the child (art. 12) are not fully reflected in the State party's legislation and political, administrative and judicial decisions, as well as in its policies and programmes relevant to children both at the national and the local level.

271. The Committee recommends that the State party continue to strengthen its efforts to integrate the general principles of the Convention, in particular the provisions of articles 2, 3 and 12, in all relevant legislation concerning children, and to apply them in all political, judicial and administrative decisions and in projects, programmes and services which have an impact on all children. These principles should guide planning and policy-making at every level as well as actions taken by social welfare institutions, courts of law and administrative authorities.

Non-discrimination

272. The Committee expresses its concern at the fact that the principle of non-discrimination is not being fully implemented for children living in vulnerable families and in institutions, children with disabilities, Roma children, refugee and asylum-seeking children and children living in rural areas, in particular with regard to their access to adequate health and educational facilities.

273. The Committee recommends that the State party collect disaggregated data and other information in order to identify discrimination against children, in particular those belonging to the above-mentioned vulnerable groups, with a view to developing comprehensive strategies aimed at ending all forms of discrimination.

3. Civil rights and freedoms

Right to a nationality

274. The Committee notes with concern that children born to stateless persons who have no right of permanent residence in Lithuania do not automatically obtain Lithuanian citizenship.

275. In light of article 7 of the Convention, the Committee encourages the State party to take all appropriate measures to ensure that all children born in Lithuania are protected from statelessness.

Corporal punishment

276. The Committee expresses its concern at the widespread use of corporal punishment, in particular within the family and in institutions, due to the generally tolerant attitude towards this practice. Further, it notes the lack of data and information available on this topic.

277. In light of articles 19, 28 (2) and 37 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party adopt appropriate legislative measures to explicitly prohibit the use of any form of corporal punishment within the family. It also encourages the State party to develop measures to raise awareness on the harmful effects of corporal punishment with a view to changing the general attitude towards this practice. The State party should promote alternative forms of discipline in families, schools and other institutions, administered in a manner consistent with the child's dignity and in conformity with the Convention. The Committee also recommends that the ban on corporal punishments in schools and other institutions be enforced.

Access to appropriate information

278. The Committee is concerned that children are not adequately protected from the violence and pornography increasingly being shown on television, in video films and in other media. Also, while noting that there is State support, including through tax reduction, for the publication and sale of books, it nevertheless notes with concern that not enough programmes and books for children are being produced and disseminated in the country.

279. In light of article 17 of the Convention, the Committee encourages the State party to further enforce appropriate guidelines and legislation for the protection of the child from information and material injurious to his or her development, in particular violence and pornography, such as the Law on the Provision of Information to the Public of 1996. It further recommends that the State party reinforce measures to encourage the production of programmes and books for children and disseminate them throughout the country, in particular in rural areas.

4. Family environment and alternative care

Children deprived of family environment

280. The Committee notes with deep concern that, owing to the inadequacy of social assistance and the lack of alternatives, an increasing number of children from poor families are being placed in institutions.

281. In light of articles 18 and 26 of the Convention, the Committee encourages the State party to further strengthen comprehensive measures to support parents, in particular those living in rural areas, in their efforts to raise their children, for instance by increasing various forms of social assistance to families, including counselling services, or by securing day-care services and facilities.

Child abuse and neglect

282. Noting that for a long period issues such as abuse and neglect of children were not recognized as problems and that deprivation of parental rights was the only legal way of protecting a child from abuse and violence within the family, the Committee expresses its concern about the lack of data, appropriate measures, mechanisms and resources to prevent and combat all forms of child abuse and other forms of domestic violence.

283. In light of article 19 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party undertake studies on domestic violence, ill-treatment and abuse, including sexual abuse, to enable it to understand the extent, scope and nature of these practices, adopt adequate measures and policies and thereby contribute to changing attitudes. The Committee notes that while such measures are included in the new Civil Code, it is not yet in force. It recommends that the State party ensure that cases of domestic violence and ill-treatment and abuse of children, including sexual, are properly investigated within a child-friendly inquiry and judicial procedure in order to guarantee better protection of child victims, including their right to privacy. All necessary measures should be taken to make sure that placement of children outside their family only occurs when it is evidently in the best interests of the child and for the shortest period possible. Measures should also be taken to ensure the provision of support services to children in legal proceedings and the physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of the victims of rape, abuse, neglect, ill-treatment and violence, in accordance with article 39 of the Convention.

Adoption and foster care

284. While noting the Law on the Care of Children of 1998, the establishment in 2000 of an adoption agency and the increase, albeit slow, in the number of children living in foster families, the Committee is nevertheless concerned at the significant number of children who have to live in orphanages and institutions and at the small number of children living in foster families because of economic problems and insufficient support from the State. Further, it notes with concern the large number of children involved in intercountry adoption, some of them without legal protection.

285. In light of article 21 and other related provisions of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party fully implement the Hague Convention on the Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption of 1993. Further, in light of articles 20 and 25, it recommends that the State party continue to undertake measures to facilitate the creation of an adequate foster care system by providing sufficient financial support.

5. Basic health and welfare

Health and health services

286. While noting that the National Health Programme runs until the year 2005, the Committee expresses its concern at the high rates of child morbidity, in particular the increase in cases of tuberculosis, and the low rates of breastfeeding. Further, it notes that there is a high rate

of child deaths due to traumas and accidents, in particular motor vehicle accidents, and that children are particularly vulnerable to the ill effects of contaminants in the soil and air. It also notes with concern the growing rates of suicide among children and youth.

287. The Committee recommends that the State party allocate appropriate resources and develop comprehensive policies and programmes to improve the health situation of all children, including measures aiming at a safe and healthy environment. Further, measures to raise awareness about and prevent deaths from accidents and suicide among children and youth should be taken and enforced.

Children with disabilities

288. The Committee expresses its concern about the fact that children with disabilities living in rural areas do not have access to the same level of services and medicines as children living in other parts of the country and that not all medicines are available for free. Further, it is concerned at the large number of children with disabilities who are institutionalized and the general lack of resources and specialized staff for children with disabilities.

289. The Committee recommends that the State party allocate the necessary resources for programmes, medicines, trained staff and facilities for all children with disabilities, especially the ones living in the rural areas, and develop community-based programmes in order to allow children to stay at home with their families. In light of the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (General Assembly resolution 48/96) and the Committee's recommendations adopted at its day of general discussion on "The rights of children with disabilities" (see CRC/C/69), it is also recommended that the State further encourage their integration into the educational system and their inclusion into society.

Adolescent health

290. The Committee, while noting progress made in this area, nevertheless expresses its concern at the increase of cases of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and HIV/AIDS, at the growing abuse of alcohol and tobacco and at the frequency of unplanned pregnancies and abortions among youth. Further, it notes the limited availability of programmes and services in the area of adolescent health including mental health, in particular treatment and rehabilitation programmes, and of prevention and information programmes, especially on reproductive health, at school.

291. The Committee recommends that the State party continue to increase its efforts to promote adolescent health, including mental health and reproductive health, and to develop a programme for the systematic sexual education of adolescents at school. The Committee further suggests that a comprehensive and multidisciplinary study be undertaken to determine the scope of adolescent health problems, including the negative impact of STDs, HIV/AIDS and alcohol abuse, in order to develop adequate policies and programmes. It is also recommended that the State party undertake further measures, including the allocation of adequate human and financial resources, to evaluate the

effectiveness of training programmes in health education, in particular reproductive health education, and to develop youth-friendly counselling, care and rehabilitation facilities that are accessible without parental consent, when this is in the best interests of the child.

Adequate standard of living

292. The Committee is concerned that a large number of families, in particular those with three or more children, and single women with children live under the subsistence level and that this problem is predominant in rural areas.

293. In light of articles 3, 4, 6, 26 and 27 of the Convention, the Committee encourages the State party to take all appropriate measures, such as the adoption and enforcement of the Programme of Assistance to Families Raising Children, to the maximum extent of its available resources and in particular at the local level, to support families in a difficult economic and/or social situation in order to ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of all children living in Lithuania, without discrimination.

6. Education, leisure and cultural activities

Education

294. The Committee notes with concern the small number of children attending pre-school education and the high number of children dropping out of school.

295. In light of article 28 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party continue taking appropriate measures to ensure regular attendance at school and to reduce dropout and ensure the implementation of the new measures taken to increase participation in pre-school education.

Leisure and cultural activities

296. The Committee notes with concern that the State party did not give adequate consideration to the rights of children to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to their age, and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.

297. In light of article 31 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party pay adequate attention to planning leisure and cultural activities for children, taking into consideration the physical and psychological development of the child.

7. Special protection measures

Children applying for asylum

298. The Committee notes with concern that children applying for asylum do not have access to adequate specific medical and psychological care, specific legal support and education. Further, it notes that unaccompanied minors applying for asylum are not separated from adults in refugee centres.

299. In light of articles 22 and 39 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party ensure that children applying for asylum have adequate living conditions and access to health and education.

Substance abuse

300. The Committee is concerned at the reported increasing use of drugs, including psychotropic substances, among children and adolescents in the State party, in particular those living in the street. Further it notes that the present welfare service system is unable to deal with the growing need for services.

301. The Committee recommends that the State party undertake studies on the abuse of drugs among children and adolescents, in particular those living in the street, with a view to understanding the extent, scope and nature of these practices, adopting adequate measures and policies and changing attitudes. Further, it encourages the State party to pursue awareness raising and preventive measures, including drug education in schools. It further recommends that the State party allocate more resources for treatment and rehabilitation services specifically tailored for children and adolescents.

Children living in the streets

302. The Committee expresses its concern at the number of children living and working in the streets and notes that the programmes and mechanisms established to assist them are not sufficient.

303. The Committee recommends that the State party support existing mechanisms to ensure that children living in the streets are provided with food, clothing, housing, health care and education, including vocational and life-skills training. Moreover, the State party should ensure that these children are provided, whenever necessary, with rehabilitation services for physical, sexual and substance abuse; protection from police brutality; and services for reconciliation with their families.

Trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation

304. The Committee, while noting the National Programme against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse of Children of 2000, expresses its deep concern at the lack of data, consistent policies, rehabilitation and reintegration programmes, and the reports of disappearances of minors, in particular girls, allegedly for trafficking purposes. Further, it notes that procuration for the purpose of prostitution is punished only in cases involving girls and that some legal provisions result in the administrative punishment of children involved in commercial sexual exploitation.

305. The Committee recommends that the State party fully implement the National Programme against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse of Children of 2000, in particular its rehabilitation and reintegration aspects. Further, it encourages the State party to abolish every legal provision that results in administrative or other

punishment of the victims, of commercial sexual exploitation and to prevent other forms of stigmatization of the victims, and to penalize procuration for the purposes of prostitution involving all children, boys as well as girls.

Administration of juvenile justice

306. The Committee, while noting the Juvenile Justice Programme, is nevertheless concerned that the juvenile justice system is not fully in compliance with the Convention and that the juvenile crime rates and the number of criminal juvenile offenders are increasing. In particular, the Committee expresses its concern at reports of juvenile offenders spending long periods in pre-trial detention because the justice system is overloaded, and at the fact that there are no programmes for their rehabilitation and reintegration into society.

307. The Committee recommends that the State party continue reviewing its law and practices regarding the juvenile justice system in order to bring it into full compliance with the Convention, in particular articles 37, 40 and 39, as well as other relevant international standards in this area, such as the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (the Beijing Rules) and the United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency (the Riyadh Guidelines), with a view to ensuring child-friendly practices by the police and at all levels of the juvenile justice system. Further, it encourages the State party to continue supporting the Juvenile Justice Programme, in particular its preventive aspect, with adequate financial and human resources, including professionals such as social workers and psychologists.

308. Further, the Committee reminds the State party that juvenile offenders should be dealt with without delay and that pre-trial detention should not be longer than the period prescribed by law and should be used only as a measure of last resort. Alternative measures to prevent pre-trial detention should be used whenever possible. The Committee recommends that the State party incorporate into its legislation and practice the United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty, in particular with a view to guaranteeing them access to effective complaints procedures covering all aspects of their treatment, and take appropriate rehabilitative measures to promote the social reintegration of the children involved in the juvenile justice system. Finally, the Committee recommends that the State party seek assistance from, among others, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Centre for International Crime Prevention, the International Network on Juvenile Justice, and UNICEF, through the United Nations Coordination Panel on Technical Advice and Assistance on Juvenile Justice.

Optional Protocols

309. The Committee encourages the State party to ratify and implement the Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, and on the involvement of children in armed conflict.

8. Dissemination of reports

310. Finally, the Committee recommends that, in light of article 44, paragraph 6, of the Convention, the initial report and written replies presented by the State party be made widely available to the public at large and that the publication of the report be considered, along with the relevant summary records and the concluding observations adopted by the Committee. Such a document should be widely distributed in order to generate debate and awareness of the Convention and its implementation and monitoring within the Government and the general public, including NGOs.

Lesotho

311. At its 685th and 686th meetings (see CRC/C/SR.685-686), held on 18 January 2001, the Committee on the Rights of the Child considered the initial report of Lesotho (CRC/C/11/Add.20), which was received on 27 April 1998, and adopted* the following concluding observations.

A. Introduction

312. The Committee welcomes the submission of the State party's initial report, which followed the established guidelines. The Committee also takes note of the written replies to its list of issues (CRC/C/Q/LES/1). The Committee is encouraged by the dialogue with the State party and notes the presence of a large delegation, but would have liked the delegation to include more persons directly involved in the implementation of the Convention.

B. Positive aspects

313. The Committee notes the efforts undertaken by the State party to ensure that the principles and provisions of the Convention are widely known. In particular, the Committee notes the State party's recent support to the initiative to translate the Convention into Sesotho and to work in cooperation with the local media to encourage the broadcasting of programmes on child rights and the Convention in local languages in various regions of the country.

314. The Committee notes the development of numerous policies and strategies, including the "Vision 2020 initiative", by the State party, addressing, inter alia, the rights of children with disabilities, anti-poverty, the rights of youth, HIV/AIDS, early childhood care and development, and a draft reproductive health strategy.

315. The Committee appreciates the State party's initiatives in the education sector and particularly the introduction of free education from 2000 for children commencing Grade One. In this context, the Committee also welcomes the State party's new education policy, which is aimed at promoting and enhancing the quality of basic education by improving the level of teacher training, the pupil-teacher ratio and the coordinated management of schools.

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* At the 697th meeting, held on 26 January 2001.

316. The Committee notes the "adolescent health corner" initiatives at the regional level, providing access to health care for adolescents.

317. The Committee welcomes the recent ratification by Lesotho of ILO Convention No. 138 concerning the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment.

C. Factors and difficulties impeding the implementation of the Convention

318. The Committee acknowledges that the economic and social difficulties facing the State party and the human rights situation in general have had, and still have, a negative impact on the situation of children and are impeding the full implementation of the Convention. In particular, the Committee notes the impact of the increasing level of poverty, very high unemployment and the emigration of professionals on children. The Committee further notes that the impact of HIV/AIDS also adversely affects the full implementation of the Convention.

D. Subjects of concern and Committee recommendations

1. General measures of implementation

Legislation

319. While noting the recent efforts made, the Committee remains concerned that domestic legislation does not fully reflect the principles and provisions of the Convention and that several recent efforts to amend domestic legislation have yet to be adopted. The Committee notes, in particular, that the Convention is not directly applied in the State party and that, as a consequence, where there are inconsistencies between domestic legislation and international standards, domestic legislation prevails. The Committee notes, further, that customary law continues to be applied in many situations and is sometimes in contradiction with the principles and provisions of the Convention. The Committee notes the recent activities of the Law Reform Committees, resulting in, inter alia, the Married Persons Equality Bill and the Sexual Offences Bill, but remains concerned that their work is hindered by a lack of human and financial resources.

320. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that ongoing customary law practices are in conformity with the Convention. The Committee recommends that the State party continue its efforts to adopt new, or to amend, legislative instruments, to implement the Committee's proposal that it undertake a review of all of its legislation and consider the enactment of a comprehensive child rights statute, with a view to ensuring the full conformity of domestic legislation with the principles and provisions of the Convention. The Committee also recommends that the State party expedite the approval of draft bills and provide the necessary financial and human resources for the full implementation of new legislation. The Committee further recommends that the State party continue to support and strengthen the work of the Law Reform Committees. Finally, the Committee recommends that the State party seek technical assistance from, inter alia, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and UNICEF.

Coordination and implementation

321. Although the Ministry for Development and Planning coordinates the implementation of programmes and policies in general, the Committee is concerned about the lack of a structure in the State party with the appropriate authority, profile and resources for coordinating the implementation of the Convention. The Committee is concerned, further, at significant regional disparities in implementation, with a high concentration of services provided in Maseru the capital city, in contrast with a much weaker provision of services in more rural areas.

322. The Committee recommends the establishment of governmental mechanisms for the coordination of the implementation of the Convention, with the necessary authority and human and financial resources to perform such a coordinating role in an effective and efficient manner. The Committee recommends, in addition, that attention be given to strengthening coordination with, and between, NGOs working towards the Convention's implementation. The Committee recommends, further, that the State party make every effort to ensure more equal implementation of the Convention throughout the State party.

Monitoring

323. The Committee notes that the establishment of an independent human rights commission was approved by the Government in 1995 but that this commission is not yet operational and that the State party remains without an independent mechanism to monitor the implementation of human rights standards, including children's rights. The Committee expresses its concern, in particular, at the absence of mechanisms in the State party through which children, as well as adults, can make complaints of human rights violations or other abuses.

324. The Committee recommends that the State party proceed rapidly with the establishment of the Human Rights Commission. The Committee recommends, further, the establishment of an independent monitoring body with responsibility for monitoring implementation of the Convention, in accordance with the Paris principles, either as part of the Human Rights Commission or as a separate body, such as a children's ombudsperson. The Committee recommends that consideration also be given to providing a mechanism through which children can make complaints of abuses of their rights.

Data collection

325. The Committee joins the State party in expressing concern that current data collection mechanisms are insufficient to ensure the systematic and comprehensive collection of disaggregated quantitative and qualitative data for all areas covered by the Convention and in relation to all groups of children, with a view to the monitoring and evaluation of progress achieved and the assessment of the impact of policies adopted with respect to children.

326. The Committee recommends that the system of data collection be reviewed and substantially strengthened with a view to incorporating all the areas covered by the Convention. The data collection system should cover all children up to the age of 18 years and should include information in respect of the rights of, inter alia, children with disabilities, children of ethic minority groups, girls, children living in rural areas, children

living in poverty, children living and/or working on the street, refugee and asylum-seeking children, children in the juvenile justice system, children of single-parent families, children born out of wedlock, children born of incestuous relations, sexually abused children and institutionalized children. The Committee recommends that the State party seek technical cooperation in this area from, inter alia, UNICEF.

Budgetary and other resources

327. The Committee is concerned that the State party has not used to the maximum extent possible the available budgetary, human and other resources for the Convention's implementation.

328. In the light of article 4, the Committee recommends that the State party make every effort to increase the proportion of the budget allocated to children's rights and, in this context, to ensure the provision of appropriate human resources and that the implementation of child policies are a priority.

NGOs and international cooperation

329. The Committee joins with the State party in expressing concern at the need for additional technical assistance and international cooperation. The Committee is concerned that civil society, including NGOs, have insufficient opportunities to influence children's rights policy making and implementation. The Committee is concerned, further, that children do not have sufficient opportunities to participate in this process.

330. The Committee recommends that the State party continue and strengthen its efforts to seek technical assistance and other forms of international cooperation, including from international NGOs, towards implementation of the Convention. The Committee recommends that the State party continue and strengthen its support to national NGOs. The Committee recommends, further, that children be provided with more opportunities to participate in the work of NGOs.

Dissemination and training on the Convention

331. The Committee is deeply concerned at the emigration of professionals essential not only for the State party's development but also for implementation of the rights of children. The Committee is also concerned that there is insufficient awareness of the principles and provisions of the Convention among the remaining professionals working for and with children and among the public at large.

332. The Committee recommends that the State party pursue and strengthen its ongoing efforts to encourage professionals to remain in the State party, particularly those professionals working with and for children. The Committee recommends that the State party provide child rights training for all relevant professional groups, including parliamentarians, judges, lawyers, chiefs, law enforcement personnel, teachers, school administrators, health professionals including psychologists, social workers, officials of central or local administration, and personnel of child-care institutions. The Committee

recommends, in addition, that the State party strengthen efforts to raise awareness of the Convention among children, parents, the media and the public at large, including in rural areas. In this regard, the Committee encourages the State party to continue its efforts to make the Convention available in Sesotho. The Committee recommends, finally, that the State party make efforts to raise awareness and discussion among the public with regard to economic, social and cultural rights, in the context of improved implementation of all of the Convention's provisions.

2. Definition of the Child

333. The Committee notes with concern the lack of clarity in the definition of the child due to the fact that on the one hand the child is defined as a person under18 years of age while on the other hand the age of majority still remains 21. The Committee is similarly concerned by the different minimum legal ages for marriage, the absence of a defined minimum age of sexual consent for boys, the very high minimum age for consulting a doctor without parental consent and the extremely low minimum age of criminal responsibility - currently age seven.

334. The Committee recommends that the State party review, and amend as appropriate, existing legislation in order to harmonize the age of majority and the overall definition of the child, to introduce one minimum legal age for marriage, to increase the minimum age for criminal responsibility, to address concerns related to the minimum age for consulting a doctor without parental consent and to establish one minimum age for sexual consent.

3. General principles

Non-discrimination

335. While noting that the principle of non-discrimination (art. 2) is reflected in the Constitution of Lesotho as well as in other domestic legislation, the Committee remains concerned that there continues to be serious discrimination in the State party, which has a negative impact on respect for children's rights and particularly on the rights of girls. The Committee is concerned, inter alia, that married women have the legal status of minors and this situation can, in certain circumstances, negatively affect respect for the rights of their children. The Committee is also concerned that the State party has not taken measures to address discrimination against children who are born out of wedlock, those affected by HIV/AIDS, children in remote rural areas, children born of incestuous relationships, institutionalized children, pregnant girls, children with disabilities, street children and children of ethnic minority groups. The Committee is also concerned that many children do not have adequate or equal access to education and health services, in particular children in the vulnerable groups mentioned above. Finally, the Committee is concerned at the difficulties and humiliation faced by mothers of children born out of wedlock in obtaining travel documents for their children.

336. The Committee urges the State party to strengthen urgently its efforts to ensure full implementation of the principle of non-discrimination, inter alia, by amending domestic legislation and increasing awareness among the population. The Committee urges the State party to give particular attention to ending discrimination against girls and women - in so far as this affects respect for the rights of children - in legislation, customary law and

in practice, to address effectively discrimination against vulnerable groups of children, inter alia, by improving their access to education and health services, and to ensure that children born out of wedlock can obtain travel documents as easily and quickly as all other children.

The right to be heard and the best interests of the child

337. The Committee is concerned that some traditional practices and attitudes can limit implementation of the right of children, especially girls, to express their views and to participate in decision-making processes. The Committee is also concerned that the evidence of children is not given appropriate weight in courts of law. The Committee is concerned, further, that the principle of the best interests of the child is not respected and that this situation is worsened by the limited implementation of children's right to be heard.

338. The Committee recommends that the State party take effective measures to encourage respect for the views of the child, particularly girls, in schools, families, and the care and judicial systems (including the magistrature), and to promote the participatory rights of children.

4. Civil rights and freedoms

Birth registration

339. The Committee is concerned at low levels of birth registration and, in particular, that some registration procedures are inaccessible, cumbersome and expensive.

340. The Committee recommends that all necessary measures be taken, including through legislation, awareness raising among government officials, community leaders and parents and the use of mobile registration offices whenever appropriate, to ensure that all children are registered at birth.

Corporal punishment

341. While noting that corporal punishment is prohibited by law in schools, the Committee remains concerned that the practice continues to be widespread in schools and in the family, in the care and juvenile justice systems and generally in society. The Committee is concerned, in particular, that corporal punishment of children is accepted among the public at large.

342. The Committee recommends that the State party take measures to implement effectively legislation prohibiting corporal punishment in schools and in care and juvenile justice institutions, and consider prohibiting corporal punishment in the family. The Committee recommends, in addition, that the State party raise awareness of the negative effects of such punishment and ensure that discipline in families, schools and all institutions is administered in a manner consistent with the child's dignity and in conformity with the Convention. The Committee recommends, further, that the State party promote the use of alternative disciplinary measures, in accordance with the principles and provisions of the Convention.

Violence

343. The Committee is extremely concerned at incidents of violence, including beatings, committed against children by law enforcement officials and the lack of investigation or criminal justice response to such incidents.

344. The Committee recommends that the State party establish an effective child-friendly complaint and investigation system to address acts of violence committed by law enforcement or other officials against children and to ensure that the perpetrators of such acts do not enjoy impunity. The Committee further urges the State party to strengthen awareness of children's rights issues within the criminal justice system.

5. Family environment and alternative care

Family breakdown

345. The Committee notes with concern the reported increase in family breakdown related to a combination of factors, inter alia, HIV/AIDS, household poverty, the retrenchment of migrant workers from South Africa and increasing unemployment. The Committee is concerned that the principle of the best interests of children is not respected by families or customary and civil courts in the course of family breakdown and that children in such situations are more likely to be abandoned or forced to live on the streets. The Committee is also concerned at the difficulties experienced by single parents, in particular single mothers, with regard to the enforcement of child maintenance payment orders and at the growing number of child-headed households, linked to the spread of HIV/AIDS. Finally, the Committee is concerned that, as a result of poverty and other factors, children experiencing family breakdown do not have access to psycho-social care.

346. The Committee recommends that the State party clarify, strengthen and ensure implementation of its policies and legislation in relation to family breakdown. The Committee also recommends that the State party strengthen the enforcement of maintenance orders and pay special attention to providing families in need with adequate support, including training and the empowerment of parents, in order to prevent the abandonment of children. The Committee recommends, in addition, that the State party strengthen its support to child-headed households, particularly in the light of the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Alternative care

347. With respect to the situation of children deprived of a family environment, the Committee expresses its concern at the insufficient number of alternative care facilities and the insufficient financial support provided to existing ones. The Committee is concerned, further, at the low standard of the living conditions in some alternative care institutions, the inadequate monitoring of placements and the limited number of qualified personnel in this field. The Committee is deeply concerned, in addition, that Juvenile Training Centres are used by courts to detain children for "welfare and education" under the Children's Protection Act No. 6 of 1980, even though these children have not committed any criminal offence. The Committee is

concerned that some parents choose to send their children to such institutions as a way of disciplining their children. The Committee is also concerned that such detentions do not appear to be monitored and that the children are usually detained with others who have been detained in the context of criminal justice procedures.

348. The Committee recommends that the State party develop additional programmes to strengthen its alternative care facilities, in particular an adequate and well-supported (e.g. via special grants for foster parents) foster care system. The Committee strongly recommends that the State party end the practice of using the Juvenile Training Centres to detain children as a form of alternative care. The Committee recommends, further, that the State party develop other alternative care systems, including foster care, that it provide additional training for social and welfare workers and establish independent complaint and monitoring mechanisms for alternative care institutions. The Committee recommends that the State party seek assistance in this regard.

Adoption

349. The Committee notes that the State party has legislation to regulate domestic adoptions but that there is de jure discrimination against prospective parents who are African, and that the procedures are often slow and cumbersome. It is noted that the State party has no legislation, policies or institutions to regulate inter-country adoptions. The lack of monitoring with respect to both domestic, including customary law adoptions, and inter-country adoption is also a matter for concern.

350. In the light of article 21 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party introduce effective and non-discriminatory regulatory and monitoring procedures with respect to both domestic and inter-country adoptions, in order to guarantee the protection of the rights of children in this regard. The Committee further encourages the State party to consider acceding to the 1993 Hague Convention on the Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Inter-country Adoption.

Ill-treatment, abuse and neglect

351. The Committee is concerned at the lack of measures and mechanisms to prevent and combat ill-treatment, violence, neglect and abuse of children, including sexual abuse. The Committee is concerned, in addition, at the lack of appropriate financial and human resources and the lack of adequately trained personnel to prevent and combat physical and sexual abuse. The Committee is concerned, further, at the lack of awareness and information, including statistical data, on these phenomena among the general public.

352. In the light of article 19, the Committee recommends that the State party undertake studies on domestic violence, ill-treatment and child abuse, including sexual abuse in order to understand the scope and nature of these practices, and to adopt adequate measures and policies to address them and to contribute to changing attitudes. The Committee also recommends that cases of domestic violence, ill-treatment, sexual and other abuse within the family be properly investigated through a child-friendly judicial procedure, and that sanctions be applied to perpetrators, due regard being given to guaranteeing the right to

privacy of the child. The Committee also recommends that appropriate weight be given to children's views in legal proceedings, that support services be provided to child witnesses in legal proceedings, that provision be made for the physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of victims of rape, abuse, neglect, ill-treatment, violence or exploitation, in accordance with article 39 of the Convention; and that measures be taken to prevent the criminalization and stigmatization of victims. The Committee recommends that the State party seek technical assistance from, inter alia, UNICEF.

6. Basic health and welfare

353. The Committee notes with concern the poor health situation of children in the State party and in particular the limited access to basic health care for children (especially in rural and mountainous areas), high maternal, child and infant mortality rates, low and decreasing immunization levels, high rates of malnutrition, poor sanitation and limited access to safe drinking water, especially in rural communities. The Committee is also concerned at the health risks linked to male circumcision. The Committee is further concerned at the low and decreasing number of trained health personnel, including mental health and social welfare professionals, which is contributing to the insufficient provision of essential services.

354. The Committee notes that the State party is currently reviewing its Social Welfare Policy and urges the State party to pursue its efforts to ensure that the new policy covers all groups of vulnerable children and to ensure that the policy provides an effective basis for addressing the challenges of, inter alia, poverty and HIV/AIDS. The Committee recommends that the State party allocate appropriate resources and develop comprehensive policies and programmes to improve health infrastructure, to increase the number of trained health and welfare, including mental health, professionals, to improve the health situation of children, to facilitate greater access to primary health services, to reduce the incidence of maternal, child and infant mortality, to prevent and combat malnutrition, especially in vulnerable and disadvantaged groups of children, and to improve access to safe drinking water and sanitation. The Committee also recommends that the State party address health risks associated with male circumcision. Additionally, the Committee encourages the State party to consider requesting technical assistance for the integrated management of childhood illnesses and for other measures for child health improvement from, inter alia, UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO).

Adolescent health and HIV/AIDS

355. Whilst noting the existence of the National AIDS Strategic Plan 2000/2001-2003/2004 and the Policy Framework on HIV/AIDS Prevention, Control and Management, the Committee remains extremely concerned at the alarmingly high incidence and increasing prevalence of HIV/AIDS amongst adults and children, in particular amongst teenage girls, and the high incidence of teenage pregnancy and STDs. The Committee expresses concern, further, at the insufficient availability of adolescent health programmes and services and the lack of adequate data in this area and on the incidence of suicide, violence, sexual exploitation and abortion, alcohol consumption and tobacco and dagger smoking.

356. The Committee strongly urges the State party to implement fully the National AIDS Strategic Plan 2000/2001-2003/2004 and the Policy Framework on HIV/AIDS Prevention, Control and Management as soon as possible and to devote to them ample resources to ensure their success. The Committee recommends, further, that a comprehensive and multi-disciplinary study be undertaken to understand the scope of adolescent health problems, including the negative impact of early pregnancy, as well as the special situation of children infected with, affected by or vulnerable to HIV/AIDS and STDs. The Committee urges the State party to give particular attention to the secondary consequences of HIV/AIDS, such as an increase in child-headed households following the death of adult family members. Additionally, it is recommended that the State party undertake further measures, including the allocation of adequate human and financial resources, to develop youth-friendly counselling, care and rehabilitation facilities for adolescents, especially girls, which would be accessible by them without parental consent; in this regard, the Committee notes the development of "Adolescent Health Corners" at the regional level and recommends that the State party pursue its objective of establishing such facilities at the district level. The Committee recommends that the State party increase its efforts to promote adolescent health policies, including mental health, particularly with respect to suicide prevention, and to strengthen reproductive health education and counselling services. In this regard, the Committee particularly recommends that all training programmes on reproductive health address boys as well as girls. The Committee recommends, further, that the State party implement measures to discourage the abuse of alcohol and the smoking of tobacco and dagger by adolescents.

Harmful traditional practices

357. The Committee is concerned at the continuing practice of female genital mutilation.

358. The Committee recommends that the State party end the practice of female genital mutilation and strengthen awareness among the population of the harm associated with such practices.

Children with disabilities

359. The Committee notes the State party's indication that a survey will be conducted to collect disaggregated data and other information on children with disabilities, which will be used as a basis for policy development, but remains concerned at the absence of legal protection and the lack of adequate programmes, facilities and services for children with physical and mental disabilities, and in particular the failure to integrate children with disabilities into mainstream schooling. The Committee is also concerned at the absence of a national strategy to ensure respect for the rights of children with disabilities.

360. The Committee urges the State party to complete the survey mentioned above as soon as possible and to make use of the information gathered to develop a comprehensive national programme, taking into account the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (General Assembly resolution 48/96) and the Committee's recommendations adopted at its Day of General Discussion on the rights of

children with disabilities (CRC/C/69). The Committee recommends that the State party develop "early identification" programmes with a view to providing prompt and appropriate early intervention to help children with disabilities, including physical and learning disabilities. The Committee recommends, in addition, that the State party increase its efforts to implement alternatives to the institutionalization of children with disabilities, establish special education programmes for them and further encourage the inclusion of these children in society including through, inter alia, ensuring access for children with disabilities to schools and public buildings. The Committee further recommends that the State party seek technical cooperation for the training of professional staff working with and for children with disabilities. The Committee recommends that the State party seek international cooperation from, inter alia, UNICEF and WHO in this regard.

7. Education, leisure and cultural activities

361. The Committee welcomes the recent initiatives of the State party to improve the provision and management of education through the Education Act 1995 and in particular through the introduction of free education for those commencing Grade One in January 2000. However, the Committee remains concerned that many children, in particular herd-boys, children living in poverty and children in remote rural communities, continue not to have access to education. With respect to the general situation of education, the Committee notes with concern the lack of trained teachers, the poor educational infrastructure and lack of equipment, the extent of overcrowding, the high pupil-teacher ratios, the high drop-out, illiteracy and repetition rates, the lack of basic training materials and shortages of text books and other materials. The Committee is particularly concerned at the poor conditions of education resources in high mountainous and rural areas. The Committee is concerned, in addition, at the low percentage of children with access to pre-school educational services.

362. **The Committee recommends that the State party continue its efforts to increase the school attendance and literacy rates of herd-boys in mountainous regions, including through research into the structural and other underlying causes for the failure of boys to complete their education and through consideration of possible solutions such as alternative approaches to care for cattle and flexible school hours and curricula. The Committee recommends that the State party introduce measures to broaden the provision of free education generally with a view to ensuring access to education for all children in the State party. The Committee recommends that all appropriate measures be taken to increase the number of trained teachers, strengthen the educational infrastructure and curriculum, and improve the coordination of education policy, the management of schools and the quality of education. In addition, the Committee recommends, that the State party undertake additional measures to motivate parents to encourage their children to enrol in school and complete their education. The Committee further recommends that the State party seek to ensure that the Convention is fully integrated into the curricula at all levels of the educational system. The Committee recommends that the State party increase significantly the availability of pre-school places. Finally, the Committee suggests that the State party seek technical assistance from, inter alia, UNICEF and UNESCO.**

363. The Committee notes with deep concern that girls who become pregnant whilst still attending school are often excluded from school and that such action is not only discriminatory against girls but also a violation of the right to education.

364. The Committee urges the State party to ensure that pregnant girls are permitted to continue attending school both during and after their pregnancy.

8. Special protection measures

Child labour

365. Labour laws regulating child labour do exist in the State party, but the Committee notes with concern the high and increasing number of children, especially boys, employed as animal herders, inter alia, and children employed as street traders, porters and in textile and garment factories. The Committee is concerned, in addition, at the number of children working in potentially dangerous conditions and at the lack of monitoring and supervision of the conditions in which they work.

366. The Committee recommends that the State party encourage the work of the Law Reform Commission on child labour concerns, that the Commission's child labour recommendations be rapidly implemented, that improvements be made to the monitoring of child labour practices and that the State party ensure that sufficient resources are allocated for this purpose with a view to the effective enforcement of labour laws and the protection of children from economic exploitation. The Committee also recommends that the State party consider ratifying ILO Convention No. 182 concerning the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

Sexual exploitation

367. The absence of adequate information, including disaggregated statistical data, on the situation of sexual exploitation of children, is a matter of concern for the Committee. The Committee is concerned, further, that young girls in particular are vulnerable to sexual exploitation in Lesotho and that the number of incidents of such exploitation is increasing.

368. In the light of article 34 and other related articles of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party undertake studies with a view to designing and implementing appropriate policies and measures, including care and rehabilitation, to prevent and combat the sexual exploitation of children, especially girls. The Committee recommends, in addition, that the State party reinforce its legislative framework to protect children fully from all forms of sexual abuse or exploitation, including within the family.

Children living and/or working on the streets

369. The Committee notes with concern the increasing number of children living and/or working on the streets in Lesotho.

370. The Committee recommends that the State party make every effort to identify and address the causes of children living and or working on the streets and to formulate policies and provide assistance addressing their needs and assuring greater respect for their rights.

Juvenile justice

371. While the Committee notes that a juvenile justice system has been established in the State party, the Committee remains concerned at:

(a) The extremely low age of criminal responsibility;

(b) The general situation of the administration of juvenile justice and in particular its incompatibility with the Convention and other recognized international standards;

(c) The absence of juvenile courts in some regions or the failure to use them even when they are available;

(d) The absence of systematic free legal advice and representation for children accused of criminal offences and the occasional contradictions in the roles of probation officers and lawyers;

(e) Weaknesses in the coordination between the chiefs' courts and the criminal justice system and the failure to ensure that children's rights are guaranteed and respected in the chiefs' courts;

(f) Overcrowding in detention facilities, and the holding of minors in these facilities;

(g) The failure to monitor the length of time children spend in detention facilities;

(h) The lack of reliable statistical data on the number of children in the juvenile justice system;

(i) The inadequacy of regulations to ensure that children remain in contact with their families while in the juvenile justice system;

(j) The limited sentencing options available to a court dealing with a child convicted of a crime;

(k) The legality of corporal punishment as a penalty for boys who have committed criminal offences under the Criminal Procedure and Evidence Act 1981;

(l) The insufficiency of facilities and programmes for the physical and psychological recovery, rehabilitation and social reintegration of child offenders;

(m) The incarceration of girls with boys and of children with adults, and the incarceration of some children in the capital, Maseru, where they cannot easily be visited by family members.

372. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Take additional steps to undertake a comprehensive reform of the juvenile justice system in the spirit of the Convention, in particular articles 37, 40 and 39, and of other United Nations standards in this field, such as the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (the Beijing Rules), the United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency (the Riyadh Guidelines) and the United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty;

(b) Amend the law as soon as possible in order to abolish the sanction of flogging for juvenile delinquents and, in the meantime, provisionally suspend the application of this form of sanction;

(c) Consider deprivation of liberty only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest possible time, reduce the maximum custodial sentence to a period shorter than three years, ensure that children are separated from adults and boys separated from girls, and ensure that children remain in contact with their families while in the juvenile justice system;

(d) Introduce training programmes on relevant international standards for all professionals involved in the system of juvenile justice;

(e) Pursue its proposal to request technical assistance in the area of juvenile justice and police training from, inter alia, OHCHR, the Centre for International Crime Prevention, the International Network on Juvenile Justice and UNICEF, through the Coordination Panel on Technical Advice in Juvenile Justice;

(f) Substantially raise the age of criminal responsibility.

Ratification of the two Optional Protocols

373. The Committee recommends that the State party consider ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflicts.

374. Finally, the Committee recommends that, in the light of article 44, paragraph 6, of the Convention, the initial report and written replies presented by the State party be made widely available to the public at large and that publication of the report be considered, along with the relevant summary records and the concluding observations adopted thereon by the Committee. Such a document should be widely distributed in order to generate debate and awareness of the Convention and its implementation and monitoring within the Government and the general public, including NGOs.

Saudi Arabia

375. At its 687th and 688th meetings (see CRC/C/SR.687 and 688), held on 19 January 2001, the Committee on the Rights of the Child considered the initial report of Saudi Arabia (CRC/C/61/Add.2), which was submitted on 15 October 1998, and adopted* the following concluding observations.

A. Introduction

376. The Committee notes that the initial State party report was prepared according to the Committee's guidelines for reporting. However, it regrets that the report is essentially legalistic and does not provide a self-critical evaluation of the prevailing situation of the exercise of children's rights in the country. The Committee notes the timely submission of the written answers, which it found informative. It further notes with appreciation the presence of a high-level delegation, which contributed to a frank dialogue.

B. Positive aspects

377. The Committee welcomes the ratification by the State party of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. It further welcomes the information, provided by the delegation, that the State party is considering ratifying the International Covenants on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and on Civil and Political Rights.

378. The Committee welcomes the establishment of the Committee on Deliberate Child Abuse.

379. The Committee notes with appreciation the generous financial aid given to developing countries by the State party.

C. Factors and difficulties impeding the implementation of the Convention

380. Noting the universal values of equality and tolerance inherent in Islam, the Committee observes that narrow interpretations of Islamic texts by State authorities are impeding the enjoyment of many human rights protected under the Convention.

D. Principal subjects of concern and recommendations

1. General measures of implementation

Reservation

381. The Committee is concerned that the broad and imprecise nature of the State party's general reservation potentially negates many of the Convention's provisions and raises concern as to its compatibility with the object and purpose of the Convention, as well as the overall implementation of the Convention.

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* At the 697th meeting, held on 26 January 2001.

382. The Committee recommends that the State party withdraw its reservation, in accordance with the Declaration and Plan of Action of the World Conference on Human Rights (1993).

Legislation

383. The Committee is concerned that several rights contained in the Convention are not reflected in domestic law. In particular, the Basic Law and other applicable laws do not expressly guarantee non-discrimination on the basis of all the grounds contained in article 2 of the Convention. In addition, the Committee notes the incompatibility of certain areas of domestic law with the Convention (e.g. discrimination against females and non-Muslims and the use of judicial punishments such as flogging), and that many laws relevant to children's rights (i.e. personal status laws, the criminal code, and the criminal and civil procedure codes) remain uncodified.

384. The Committee recommends that the State party conduct a comprehensive review of the Basic Law and domestic laws, including administrative regulations and legal procedural rules, to ensure that they conform to international human rights standards, including the Convention, that they are sufficiently clear and precise, are published, and are accessible to the public.

Coordination

385. The Committee is concerned that there is inadequate administrative coordination and cooperation at the national and local government levels in the implementation of the Convention.

386. In light of the 1993 Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (para. 71), the Committee recommends that the State party pursue the preparation and development of a comprehensive national plan of action for the implementation of its international human rights obligations, including the Convention, through an open and consultative process. Attention should be given to intersectoral coordination and cooperation at and between national and local levels of government. The Committee recommends that the State party provide adequate support to local authorities, including the development of professional capacity, for implementation of the Convention.

387. The Committee is concerned that insufficient efforts have been made to involve civil society in the implementation of the Convention.

388. The Committee recommends that the State party consider a systematic approach to involving civil society, especially children's associations and advocacy groups, throughout all stages of the implementation of the Convention, including policy-making. The Committee recommends that greater efforts be made to involve relevant State actors in the dialogue with civil society, such as local government officials and the police, and further encourages the State party to support initiatives aimed at strengthening the role of civil society.

Data collection

389. The Committee is concerned that disaggregated data on persons under 18 years relating to the rights contained in the Convention are not systematically collected and used effectively to assess progress and design policies to implement the Convention.

390. The Committee recommends that the State party establish a mechanism to systematically collect and analyse data on persons under 18. The Committee encourages the State party to seek technical assistance from UNICEF, among others, in this regard.

Monitoring structures

391. The Committee emphasizes the importance of setting up an independent mechanism with a mandate to regularly monitor and evaluate progress in the implementation of the Convention at the national and local levels. Moreover, the Committee notes that guarantees of non-discrimination, religious freedom and due process laid down in domestic law without independent and effective mechanisms to monitor their application do not on their own ensure the enjoyment of these and other fundamental rights.

392. The Committee encourages the State party to consider the establishment of an independent national human rights institution in accordance with the Paris Principles relating to the status of national institutions (General Assembly resolution 48/134) to monitor and evaluate progress in the implementation of the Convention at the national and, if appropriate, at the local levels. This institution should be empowered to receive and investigate complaints of violations of child rights in a child-friendly manner, and address them effectively. The Committee encourages the State party to seek technical assistance from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and UNICEF, among others.

Training/dissemination of the Convention

393. The Committee is concerned at the low level of awareness of the Convention amongst professionals working with and for children and the general public, including children themselves. The Committee is concerned that the State party is not undertaking adequate dissemination and awareness-raising activities in a systematic and targeted manner.

394. The Committee recommends that the State party develop an ongoing programme for the dissemination of information regarding the implementation of the Convention among children and parents, civil society and all sectors and levels of government. Moreover, the Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts and develop systematic and ongoing human rights training programmes, including on the provisions of the Convention, for all professional groups working with children (e.g. the Consultative Council, judges, lawyers, law enforcement officials, civil servants, local government officials, personnel working in institutions and places of detention for children, teachers, health personnel, including psychologists, and social workers). The Committee encourages the State party to seek technical assistance from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and UNICEF, among others, in this regard.

2. Definition of the child

395. The Committee is concerned that the definition of the child is unclear under Saudi law and that the age of majority is not defined. For example, the absence of a defined minimum age for marriage may result in the arbitrary and disparate application of laws and discrimination between girls and boys.

396. The Committee recommends that the State party review its legislation so that the definition of the child, the age of majority and other minimum age requirements conform to the principles and provisions of the Convention and are gender neutral in particular, and ensure that they are enforced by law.

3. General principles

The right to non-discrimination

397. The Committee is concerned by the persistence of discrimination in the State party. In particular, the Committee finds that direct and indirect discrimination against girls and children born out of wedlock, including in areas relating to civil status (e.g. lack of identity cards for females) and personal status (e.g. inheritance, custody and guardianship), is incompatible with article 2. The Committee is concerned that the nationality law does not grant equal citizenship status to children of Saudi women married to non-nationals. The Committee expresses its concern at the persistence of stereotypical attitudes about the roles and responsibilities of women and men.

398. In accordance with article 2 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party take effective measures, including enacting or rescinding civil and criminal legislation where necessary, to prevent and eliminate discrimination on the grounds of sex and birth in all fields of civil, economic, political, social and cultural life. In this regard, the Committee encourages the State party to consider the practice of other States that have been successful in reconciling fundamental rights with Islamic texts. The Committee recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures, such as comprehensive public education campaigns, to prevent and combat negative societal attitudes in this regard, particularly within the family, and train members of the legal profession, especially the judiciary, to be gender-sensitive. Religious leaders should be mobilized to support such efforts.

Best interests of the child

399. The Committee is concerned that in actions concerning children, the general principle of the best interests of the child contained in article 3 of the Convention is not always a primary consideration, including in matters relating to family law (e.g. custody under the law is determined by the child's age rather than the child's best interests, and is discriminatory).

400. The Committee recommends that the State party review its legislation and administrative measures to ensure that article 3 of the Convention is duly reflected therein and taken into consideration.

Right to life

401. As the age of majority is not defined, the Committee is seriously concerned that there is a possibility that the death penalty may be imposed for offences committed by persons who were below 18 years at the time the crime was committed, contrary to articles 6 and 37 (a) of the Convention.

402. The Committee strongly recommends that the State party take immediate steps to halt and abolish by law the imposition of the death penalty for crimes committed by persons under 18.

Respect for the views of the child

403. The Committee is concerned that respect for the views of the child remains limited owing to traditional societal attitudes towards children in schools, the courts, and especially within the family.

404. The Committee encourages the State party to promote and facilitate, within the family, the school, the courts and administrative bodies, respect for the views of children and their participation in all matters affecting them, in accordance with article 12 of the Convention. In this regard, the Committee recommends that the State party develop skills-training programmes in community settings for teachers, social workers and local officials to assist children to express their informed views and opinions, and to have them taken into consideration. The Committee recommends that the State party seek assistance from UNICEF, among others.

4. Civil rights and freedoms

Freedom of thought, conscience and religion

405. The Committee emphasizes that the human rights of children cannot be realized independently from the human rights of their parents, or in isolation from society at large. In light of articles 14 and 30 of the Convention and the 1981 Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief (General Assembly resolution 36/55), the Committee is concerned at the restrictions on the freedom of religion, and that restrictions on the freedom to manifest one's religion do not comply with the requirements outlined in article 14, paragraph 3.

406. The Committee recommends that the State party take all effective measures, including enacting or rescinding legislation where necessary, to prevent and eliminate discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief in the recognition, exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms in all fields of civil, economic, political, social and cultural life. The Committee recommends that the State party make every effort, including public education campaigns, to combat intolerance on the grounds of religion or other belief.

Protection from torture and inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment

407. In light of article 37 (a) of the Convention, the Committee is seriously concerned that persons under 18 may be subject while in detention to corporal punishment, such as flogging, under article 28 of the 1977 Detention and Imprisonment Regulations. It is also disturbed that persons who committed crimes when they were under 18 may be sentenced to a variety of methods of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment such as flogging, stoning and amputation, which are systematically imposed by judicial authorities. The Committee finds that application of such measures is incompatible with the Convention. Moreover, the Committee is concerned about reports that members of the Committees for the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice routinely harass and assault persons under 18 for, inter alia, dress code infractions.

408. The Committee recommends that the State party take all necessary steps to end the imposition of corporal punishment, including flogging and other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment and punishment, on persons who may have committed crimes when they were under 18. It also recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures to ensure that law enforcement officials respect and protect human dignity and maintain and uphold the human rights of all persons in the course of their duties.

5. Family environment and alternative care

Violence/abuse/neglect/maltreatment

409. In light of articles 19 and 39 of the Convention, the Committee is concerned at the incidence of ill-treatment of children in schools and within the family. It is further concerned that domestic violence is a problem in Saudi Arabia and that this has harmful consequences on children.

410. The Committee recommends that the State party take legislative measures to prohibit all forms of physical and mental violence, including corporal punishment and sexual abuse, against children in the family, the schools and care institutions. The Committee recommends that these measures be accompanied by public education campaigns about the negative consequences of ill-treatment of children and the promotion of positive, non-violent forms of discipline as an alternative to corporal punishment. Programmes for the rehabilitation and reintegration of abused children need to be strengthened. Moreover, adequate procedures and mechanisms need to be established to receive complaints; monitor, investigate and prosecute instances of ill-treatment; and ensure that the abused child is not victimized in legal proceedings. The Committee recommends the training of teachers, law enforcement officials, care workers, judges and health professionals in the identification, reporting and management of cases of ill-treatment. In addition, the State party should recruit, train and employ women police officers. Attention should be given to addressing and overcoming socio-cultural barriers that inhibit victims from seeking assistance. The Committee recommends that the State party establish hotlines and shelters, staffed by women, for the protection of women and children at risk of or fleeing abuse. The Committee recommends that the State party seek assistance from UNICEF and WHO, among others.

6. Basic health and welfare

Right to health and health care

411. Taking note of the significant achievements in the development of primary health care and specialized health services, the Committee is concerned at the insufficient information available in relation to adolescent health, such as information on access to reproductive health services and mental health counselling services.

412. The Committee recommends that the State party undertake a comprehensive study to understand the nature and extent of adolescent health problems and, with the full participation of adolescents, use this as a basis to formulate adolescent health policies and programmes. In light of article 24, the Committee recommends that adolescents have access to and be provided with reproductive health education and child-friendly counselling and rehabilitation services. The Committee recommends that the State party seek assistance from UNICEF and WHO, among others.

7. Education, leisure and cultural activities

Education

413. Noting significant efforts by the State party to improve education coverage, the Committee remains concerned that the system of education continues to emphasize rote learning rather than the development of analytical skills. It is also concerned that the aims of education presented in the report do not adequately reflect the aims outlined under article 29 of the Convention. In particular:

(a) It is seriously concerned that the State party's policy on education for girls (e.g. articles 9 and 153 of the 1969 Policy of Education) discriminates against girls and is incompatible with article 29 (a) of the Convention; and

(b) That the development of and respect for human rights, tolerance and equality of the sexes and of religious and ethnic minorities are not explicitly included in the curricula.

414. The Committee recommends that the State party undertake a process of curriculum and teaching methodology reform with the full participation of children, which stresses the importance of developing critical thinking and problem-solving skills. In light of article 2 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party take due regard of article 29 and direct education to the development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to the fullest and consider introducing human rights, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child, into the school curricula, including at the primary school level, in order to address discrimination against girls in particular. The Committee encourages the State party to seek assistance from UNICEF and UNESCO, among others.

8. Special measures of protection

Administration of juvenile justice

415. The Committee is concerned that as the age of majority is not defined, and in the absence of a published criminal code and code of criminal procedure, persons under 18 may be prosecuted for crimes in the same manner as adults (i.e. without special procedures) and be subject to the same penalties as adults. The Committee is also concerned that the lack of an independent and effective child-friendly monitoring and complaints mechanism and adequate access to legal counsel may put a child at risk of arbitrary arrest and detention under the 1977 Detention and Imprisonment Regulations and the 1983 Principles of Arrest, Temporary Confinement and Preventative Detention Regulations. The Committee is concerned that females under 18 are detained with adult females under the 1975 Statutes of the Welfare Institutions for Young Women.

416. The Committee recommends that the State party establish a system of juvenile justice, fully integrating into its legislation and practice the provisions of the Convention, in particular articles 37, 40 and 39, as well as other relevant international standards in this area, such as the Beijing Rules, the Riyadh Guidelines, the United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty and the Vienna Guidelines for Action on Children in the Criminal Justice System. It recommends that the State party expedite the promulgation of a criminal code and a code of criminal procedure. Particular attention should be paid to ensure that: deprivation of liberty is only used as a measure of last resort; children have access to legal aid and independent and effective complaints mechanisms; and persons under 18 are not detained with adults. The Committee recommends that the State party seek assistance from, among others, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Centre for International Crime Prevention, the International Network on Juvenile Justice and UNICEF, through the Coordination Panel on Technical Advice and Assistance on Juvenile Justice.

9. Optional Protocols

417. The Committee encourages the State party to ratify and implement the Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, and on the involvement of children in armed conflict.

10. Dissemination of reports

418. Finally, the Committee recommends that in accordance with article 44, paragraph 6, of the Convention, the initial report presented by the State party be made widely available to the public at large and that consideration be given to the publication of the report along with the written answers to the list of issues raised by the Committee, the relevant summary records of the discussion, and the concluding observations adopted by the Committee following its consideration of the report. Such a document should be widely distributed in order to generate debate and awareness of the Convention and its implementation and monitoring within the Government, the Parliament and the general public, including concerned non-governmental organizations.

Palau

419. The Committee considered the initial report of Palau (CRC/C/51/Add.3), received on 21 October 1998, at its 691st to 692nd meetings (see CRC/C/SR.691-692), held on 23 January 2001, and adopted* the following concluding observations.

A. Introduction

420. The Committee welcomes the submission of the State party's initial report, which followed the established guidelines. The Committee welcomes the written replies to its list of issues (CRC/C/Q/PAL/1) which allowed for a clearer understanding of the situation of children's rights in the State party. The Committee is encouraged by the dialogue it had with the State party and acknowledges that the presence of a delegation involved in the implementation of the Convention allowed for a fuller assessment of the situation of children in Palau.

B. Positive aspects

421. The Committee expresses satisfaction with the quality of the State party report, which provided information on the practical implementation of the Convention, as well as the challenges and limitations faced in this regard. The Committees notes with appreciation that the preparation of the State report was a collaborative process that involved political and community leaders, including the Council of Chiefs, as well as civil society and the general public.

422. The Committee notes the establishment in 1995 of the National Committee on Population and Children (CoPopChi), the inter-agency committee mandated inter alia to monitor implementation of the Convention. The Committee also welcomes the inclusion of NGOs in the membership of CoPopChi and its work in cooperation with the Council of Chiefs.

423. The Committee notes with appreciation the efforts of the State party to disseminate the principles and provisions of the Convention. In particular, the Committee notes that the State party has translated the Convention into Palauan and distributed it at public meetings, in schools and among parents.

424. The Committee welcomes the National Plan of Action for Children presented to it by the State party, which identifies priority areas for action and makes recommendations with regard to agencies and organizations best suited to implement the Plan.

425. The Committee welcomes the establishment of the Victims of Crime Assistance (VOCA) programme that operates within the Ministry of Health to provide assistance to victims of child abuse and domestic violence.

426. The Committee welcomes the recent (1997-1998) legal amendment that provides for compulsory education for all children between the ages of 5 and 17 years.

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* At the 697th meeting, held on 26 January 2001.

C. Factors and difficulties impeding the implementation of the Convention

427. The Committee notes the challenges faced by the State party in implementing adequate programmes and services for children living in the outer islands, which are in some instances isolated and very difficult to reach. The Committee also notes that the limited availability of skilled human resources, compounded by the relatively high rate of emigration, also adversely affects the full implementation of the Convention. Additionally, it is noted that a significant portion of the State party's financing is derived from transfer payments from the United States under the Compact of Free Association, the phasing out of which in 2009 may have an impact on the allocation of budgetary resources for children. The implementation of the Convention is further hindered by the fact that the National Master Development Plan, established in 1998 as a strategic framework for achieving economic independence, does not include children's programmes.

D. Subjects of concern and the Committee's Recommendations

1. General measures of implementation

Status of the Convention in domestic law

428. The Committee notes that the Convention on the Rights of the Child may not be invoked before the courts unless the relevant articles have been enacted into the Palau Code and expresses concern that insufficient efforts have been made to facilitate this process.

429. The Committee recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures to enact domestic legislation to give direct effect to the Convention.

Legislation

430. While the Committee notes that the State party has undertaken a study to determine the inconsistencies between its laws (both statutory and customary laws) and the Convention, it is concerned that insufficient efforts have been made to address the inconsistencies found. Concern is expressed that domestic legislation still does not fully conform to the principles and provisions of the Convention.

431. The Committee recommends that the State party take all effective measures to ensure that its laws conform fully to the principles and provisions of the Convention. The Committee also encourages the State party to consider the possibility of enacting a comprehensive code for children. The Committee recommends that the State party seek technical assistance from, inter alia, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and UNICEF.

Ratification of international human rights instruments

432. The Committee expresses regret that the State party has not yet acceded to the six main international human rights instruments, including the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. The Committee notes that

these international human rights instruments would reinforce a culture of human rights and strengthen the efforts of the State party to meet its obligations in guaranteeing the rights of all children under its jurisdiction.

433. The Committee encourages the State party to consider the possibility of acceding to the international human rights instruments to which it is not yet a party.

Coordination

434. While the Committee notes that the National Committee on Population and Children (CoPopChi) has been established to coordinate the implementation of the Convention, it is concerned that insufficient human and financial resources have been allocated for the Committee.

435. The Committee recommends that the State party allocate adequate human and financial resources to CoPopChi.

436. The Committee notes that the State party has elaborated a National Plan of Action for Children that establishes priorities that are largely consistent with the provisions and principles of the Convention. However, the Committee is concerned that the Office of Child and Family Support, identified in the National Plan of Action for Children as the focal point for children and family support activities, as well as for the implementation of the Convention, has not yet been established.

437. The Committee encourages the State party to take all appropriate measures to implement the proposed National Plan of Action for Children. The Committee recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures to establish the Office of Child and Family Support and to ensure that adequate financial, human and technical resources are allocated to that office to enable it to function effectively.

Data collection

438. The Committee notes that the report and the core document of the State party both contain substantive statistical data. The Committee is concerned that the State party's data collection mechanism does not adequately allow for the systematic and comprehensive collection of disaggregated data on and the effective monitoring and evaluation of progress achieved in implementing policies and programmes for children below the age of 18 years.

439. The Committee recommends that the State party reinforce its efforts to develop a comprehensive system of data collection incorporating all the areas covered by the Convention. Such a system should cover all children below the age of 18 years, with specific emphasis on those who are particularly vulnerable, including children of non-Palauan parentage, especially children of immigrant families; children living in the outer islands; children in conflict with the law; children of single-parent families; and sexually abused children, including boys. In this context, the Committee recommends that the State party seek technical assistance from, inter alia, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and UNICEF.

Independent monitoring structure

440. The Committee notes that the State party, under the National Plan of Action for Children, intends to establish an ombudsperson for children within the proposed Office for Child and Family Support. The Committee further notes that that office will also be responsible for coordinating the implementation of the Convention. The Committee expresses concern at the potential conflict of interest that may arise as a result of having the same office responsible for both coordination and monitoring.

441. The Committee encourages the State party to reinforce its efforts to establish an independent monitoring mechanism, such as an ombudsperson for children, to deal with complaints of violations of the rights of children and to provide remedies for such violations. The Committee further encourages the State party to take all appropriate measures to ensure that the office of the ombudsperson is allocated adequate resources and is child-friendly and accessible to children. The Committee suggests that the State party introduce an awareness raising campaign to facilitate the effective use by children of the monitoring mechanism. The Committee further suggests that the State party reconsider its proposal to incorporate the ombudsperson for children within the Office for Child and Family Support so as to ensure that the agency with responsibility for coordinating implementation of the Convention is not also responsible for monitoring implementation.

Allocation of budgetary and human resources

442. The Committee notes with concern that budgetary allocations for education and social services have been gradually reduced since independence (1994) and that there is a scarcity of resources for welfare and social services. The Committee is further concerned that there is no social welfare system in the State party. Additionally, the Committee is concerned that in the light of article 4 of the Convention, not enough attention has been paid to allocating budgetary resources, at both the national and community levels, in favour of children "to the maximum extent of ... available resources". The Committee expresses concern that insufficient efforts have been made to ensure that an adequate proportion of financing gained through international cooperation is allocated to children's programmes.

443. In the light of articles 2, 3 and 6 of the Convention, the Committee encourages the State party to pay particular attention to the full implementation of article 4 of the Convention by prioritizing budgetary allocations to ensure implementation of the economic, social and cultural rights of children, to the maximum extent of available resources, and where possible with international cooperation. In allocating resources, the State party should pay particular attention not only to education and health, but also to social services, especially in the outer islands and among non-Palauan children, to redress the gradual reduction in allocation to these areas. The Committee recommends that the State party establish a social welfare system to protect vulnerable children, particularly in the light of the recent trend towards charging fees for social services. The Committee also recommends that the State party allocate adequate resources to strengthen the infrastructure of professionals working with and for children. The Committee encourages

the State party to reinforce its efforts in preparation for the eventual phasing out of the Compact of Free Association by, inter alia, allocating adequate financial and human resources. In this connection, the State party should guarantee greater protection for the most vulnerable groups of children against the adverse effects of these economic changes.

Dissemination of the Convention

444. The Committee notes the initiatives of the State party to promote awareness of the principles and provisions of the Convention, including the translation of the Convention into Palauan and the collaborative process involved in the preparation of the report. The Committee is concerned, however, that State officials, parliamentarians, professional groups, children, parents, traditional leaders and helpers and the public at large are still not sufficiently aware of the Convention and the rights-based approach enshrined therein.

445. The Committee recommends that greater effort be made to ensure that the provisions of the Convention are widely known and understood by adults and children alike, particularly at the community level. In this regard, the Committee recommends the reinforcement of adequate and systematic training and/or sensitization of State officials; parliamentarians; and professional groups working with and for children, such as judges, lawyers, law enforcement personnel, teachers, school administrators and health personnel, including psychologists and social workers, as well as traditional community leaders and helpers. Further, the Committee recommends that the State party seek to ensure that the Convention is fully integrated into the curricula at all levels of the educational system. The Committee also encourages the State party to continue to promote the Convention through, inter alia, the use of local languages and traditional methods of communication. The Committee suggests that the State party seek technical assistance from, inter alia, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and UNICEF.

2. Definition of the child

446. The Committee expresses concern regarding the low legal age for criminal responsibility (10 years). The Committee notes with concern that the State party has not yet established legal minimum ages for sexual consent of boys and employment for children. The Committee notes that the National Youth Policy Task Force has proposed a narrowing of the definition of youth from 15-45 years to 15-34 years. However, it is concerned that the Task Force's new proposal still does not take into account the definition of the child (all persons below the age of 18 years) provided in the Convention.

447. The Committee recommends that the State party raise the legal age for criminal responsibility. The Committee recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures to introduce legal minimum ages for sexual consent of boys and employment of children to ensure conformity with the principles and provisions of the Convention and to guarantee greater protection for all children below the age of 18 years. In the light of article 1 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party reconsider its proposal regarding the definition of youth.

3. General principles

448. The Committee wishes to express its concern that the State party does not appear to have fully taken into account the provisions of the Convention, especially its general principles, as reflected in articles 2 (non-discrimination), 3 (best interests of the child), 6 (survival and development) and 12 (respect for the views of the child), in its legislation, its administrative and judicial decisions, as well as in its policies and programmes relevant to children.

449. It is the Committee's view that further efforts should be undertaken to ensure that the Convention, and in particular the general principles, not only guide policy discussion and decision-making, but are also appropriately integrated in all legal amendments, as well as in judicial and administrative decisions and in projects, programmes and services which have an impact on children.

Non-discrimination

450. The Committee notes with concern that the principle of non-discrimination is not adequately implemented, in particular with respect to vulnerable groups of children, especially children of non-Palauan parentage, including children of immigrant families and children adopted through inter-country adoptions; children living in the outer islands; and children living and/or working on the streets. The Committee is particularly concerned about their limited access to adequate health, education and other social services. The Committee also expresses concern at the disparity in the legal minimum age for marriage of girls (16 years) and boys (18 years).

451. The Committee recommends that the State party increase its efforts to ensure the implementation of laws, policies and programmes guaranteeing the principle of non-discrimination and full compliance with article 2 of the Convention, particularly as it relates to the vulnerable groups. In particular, the Committee recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures, including those of a legal nature, to ensure that non-Palauan children are afforded equal and adequate access to health, education and social services. The Committee further recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures to increase the legal minimum age of marriage for girls to that of boys (18 years).

Best interests of the child

452. The Committee is concerned that the general principle of the best interests of the child (art. 3) has not been taken fully into account in the State party's legislative, administrative and judicial decisions, as well as in policies and programmes relevant to children. In this regard, the Committee notes that under customary law, family matters usually reflect "the best interests of all concerned parties" as opposed to "the principle of the best interests of the child".

453. The Committee recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures to ensure that the general principle of the best interests of the child is appropriately integrated in all legal provisions and under customary law, as well as in judicial and administrative decisions and in projects, programmes and services which have an impact on children.

Respect for the views of the child

454. The Committee notes that the views of children aged 12 years and older are heard in court on matters relating to their own adoption and that children are heard in criminal cases. In other matters the right of the child to express his or her views in court is at the discretion of the judge. While noting that family law matters are generally dealt with under customary law, the Committee is concerned that traditional culture, values and attitudes may not always facilitate expression and consideration of the views of children.

455. In the light of article 12 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party develop a systematic approach to increase awareness, including among traditional leaders, of the participatory rights of children; and to further encourage respect for the views of the child in the family, communities, schools, and administrative and judicial systems. The Committee welcomes the positive reaction of the delegation to the proposal to consider the establishment of a children's parliament and encourages the State party to review the process undertaken by other States in establishing such a parliament or encouraging some other framework for the participation of children in society.

4. Family environment and alternative care

Children deprived of a family environment

456. The Committee notes with concern the breakdown of the traditional extended family structure and the increasing number of female-headed households, particularly in the light of the lack of a welfare support system and alternative care facilities, as well as of inadequate early child-care services. The Committee further expresses concern at the increasing number of children living and/or working on the streets and the lack of policies, programmes and services to provide greater protection and care for these children and to strengthen families.

457. The Committee recommends that the State party undertake a needs-assessment study of female-headed households with a view to ensuring adequate availability and accessibility of welfare programmes, alternative care facilities and early child-care services. The Committee recommends that the State party undertake a study to understand the scope and nature of the increasing phenomenon of children living and/or working on the streets. Additionally, the Committee recommends that the State party establish mechanisms to ensure that children living and/or working on the streets are provided with nutrition, clothing, housing, health and rehabilitation services, education, and vocational and life-skills training. Moreover, in the light of the weakening of the extended family structure, the Committee recommends that special attention should be paid to the strengthening of families as social units. The Committee recommends that the State party cooperate and coordinate its efforts with civil society in this regard.

Adoptions and foster care

458. The Committee expresses concern at the inadequate legislation, policies and institutions to regulate inter-country adoptions and to protect the rights of children in this regard. It is noted with concern that the law regarding inter-country adoptions does not allow the adopting parents

to transfer their nationality to non-Palauan adopted children. Additionally, concern is expressed that children in inter-country adoptions are generally not eligible for a Palauan passport; and may not own or inherit land or benefit from health, education and social service subsidies. The Committee expresses further concern at the lack of monitoring with respect to both domestic and inter-country adoptions, as well as the widespread practice of unmonitored informal adoptions within the State party. The Committee notes with concern that despite the impact of urbanization and the changing nature of the traditional extended family support system, the State party has not yet instituted a foster care programme and other alternative care facilities.

459. In the light of article 21 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party establish proper monitoring procedures with respect to both domestic and inter-country adoptions and introduce adequate measures to monitor the practice of traditional informal adoptions with the view to preventing abuse and protecting the best interests of the child. Additionally, it is recommended that the State party take all appropriate measures, including legal and administrative ones, to ensure the effective regulation of inter-country adoptions and to protect the rights of children in this regard. The Committee recommends that the State party consider the implementation of foster care and other alternative care programmes to guarantee greater protection and care for children deprived of a family environment. The Committee encourages the State party to consider the possibility of acceding to the Hague Convention of 1993 on the Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Inter-country Adoption.

Abuse/neglect/maltreatment/violence

460. The Committee notes the establishment of the VOCA Programme that provides support services for victims of child abuse and domestic violence, as well as the recent studies undertaken on domestic violence and child abuse. The Committee is concerned about the increasing incidence of sexual abuse of children, including within the family, as well as the continued lack of awareness about domestic violence, ill-treatment, abuse (sexual, physical and psychological) and neglect of children. Concern is also expressed at the insufficient financial and human resources allocated to VOCA, as well as the inadequate programmes established to prevent and combat all forms of abuse against children and to facilitate the rehabilitation of child victims. The Committee is also concerned about the lack of authority under law to remove a child from harmful situations within the home in order to protect him/her.

461. In the light of article 19, the Committee recommends that the State party reinforce its efforts to prevent and combat domestic violence; child abuse, including sexual abuse; and ill-treatment and neglect of children. It further recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures to ensure that cases of domestic violence, ill-treatment and sexual abuse of children are properly investigated in the context of a child-friendly judicial procedure and that sanctions are applied to perpetrators, with due regard given to protecting the right to privacy of the child. Additionally, all appropriate measures should be taken to guarantee the physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of child victims, in accordance with article 39 of the Convention, including through awareness raising on the role of VOCA. The Committee recommends that the State party review its

legislation to guarantee greater protection for children in harmful situations. The Committee recommends that the State party seek technical assistance from, inter alia, UNICEF.

Corporal punishment

462. The Committee notes that the Master Plan for Education (2000) is aimed, inter alia, at strengthening the network of guidance and counselling and at discouraging and preventing the use of physical punishment at both the primary and secondary school levels. The Committee is concerned, however, that corporal punishment is still practised and widely accepted in the State party and that domestic legislation generally does not prohibit and eliminate its use in homes and schools.

463. The Committee recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures, including of a legislative nature, to prohibit and eliminate all forms of corporal punishment in schools and in homes. The Committee further suggests that awareness raising and education campaigns be conducted to change public attitudes and ensure that alternative forms of discipline are administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity and in conformity with the Convention, especially articles 19 and 28.2.

5. Basic health and welfare

Health and health services

464. The Committee notes the efforts of the State party to improve early childhood health care and services and to introduce a health insurance programme. While the Committee notes the introduction of a training programme to promote proper breastfeeding techniques, it remains concerned about the continued decline in breastfeeding, especially among working mothers. The Committee notes with concern the increasingly poor nutrition practices and food choices, including within the school lunch programme, as well as the high incidence of overweight and obesity among children, especially those living in urban areas. The Committee notes that abortion is illegal except on medical grounds and expresses concern regarding the best interests of child victims of rape and/or incest in this regard. Concern is also expressed about the inadequate environmental health conditions in the State party, particularly as regards solid waste management.

465. The Committee recommends that the State party reinforce its efforts to promote proper breastfeeding practices, especially among working mothers and in the work environment. The Committee recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures to promote and encourage healthy nutritional practices, in order to prevent and address overweight and obesity among children. The Committee recommends that the State party review its legislation concerning abortion, with a view to guaranteeing the best interests of child victims of rape and incest. Further, it recommends that the State party reinforce its efforts to improve environmental health, particularly as regards solid waste management.

Adolescent health

466. The Committee expresses its concern with respect to the limited availability of programmes and services and the lack of adequate data in the area of adolescent health, including suicides; mental health, particularly with respect to boys; teenage pregnancy; STDs; and the use and abuse of tobacco, betelnut, alcohol and illicit drugs.

467. The Committee recommends that the State party increase its efforts to promote adolescent health policies and services and to further strengthen reproductive health education, including the promotion of male acceptance of the use of contraceptives. The Committee further suggests that a comprehensive and multidisciplinary study be undertaken to understand the scope of adolescent mental health concerns. Additionally, it is recommended that the State party undertake further measures, including the allocation of adequate human and financial resources, to increase the number of social workers and psychologists, and to develop accessible youth-friendly care, counselling, and rehabilitation facilities for adolescents. The Committee encourages the State party to seek technical assistance from, inter alia, UNICEF and the World Health Organization.

Children with disabilities

468. While the Committee notes that the State party has enacted legislation to protect children with disabilities and established an Inter-agency Task Force on Children with Special Needs, it is concerned that there are insufficient programmes, services and resources for children in this regard. The Committee is also concerned about the insufficient efforts and the reluctance of teachers to facilitate the inclusion and acceptance of children with disabilities into the regular school system, despite requirements under law.

469. In the light of the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (General Assembly resolution 48/96) and the Committee's recommendations adopted at its Day of General Discussion on "The rights of children with disabilities" (CRC/C/69), it is recommended that the State party strengthen its efforts to develop early identification programmes to prevent disabilities; establish special education programmes for children with disabilities; and implement the law that provides for their inclusion within the school system. Additionally, the Committee encourages the State party to reinforce its efforts to raise awareness and sensitize the public about the rights and special needs of children with disabilities, including children with mental health concerns. In this regard, the Committee encourages the State party to consider including mental disabilities within the definition of disabilities; to ensure that children with such concerns are provided adequate care, services and rehabilitation; and to guarantee adequate human and financial resource allocations. The Committee further recommends that the State party seek technical cooperation for the training of professional staff working with and for children with disabilities from, inter alia, the World Health Organization.

6. Education, leisure and cultural activities

Right to and aims of education

470. The Committee notes the Master Plan for Education 2000, which is aimed at, inter alia, improving the quality and relevance of education and preparing students for adult life. However, the Committee is concerned about the inadequate performance of students and the continually high drop-out rates, particularly at the secondary school level. Concern is expressed regarding the insufficient teacher support in smaller schools in the rural areas and the outer islands, as well as the situation of overcrowding in the larger schools in the urban centres. The Committee expresses concern that there is no physical education programme in the school system. The Committee notes with concern that the budgetary allocations for education have been progressively reduced since independence in 1994. The Committee also notes with concern the lack of clear policy and practice on the incorporation of Palauan, as a parallel language, in the educational curriculum.

471. The Committee recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures, including the allocation of adequate financial, human and technical resources, to improve the situation (including the quality and relevance) of education and to ensure that all children enjoy the right to education. The Committee further recommends that the State party seek to implement additional measures to encourage children, especially boys, to stay in school, particularly during the period of compulsory education. In this connection, it is recommended that the State party undertake a study on school drop-out and the linkages between the drop-out rate and the relevance of educational material and methods of teaching. In the light of article 31, the Committee recommends that the State party introduce a physical education programme into the school curriculum. The Committee encourages the State party to reinforce its efforts to establish clear policy and practice regarding the use of Palauan as a parallel language in the school curriculum. The Committee recommends that the State party undertake a review of the aims of education outlined in the Master Plan for Education 2000, with a view to ensuring full conformity with article 29.1 and other relevant articles of the Convention. It is further recommended that the State party seek to strengthen its educational system through closer cooperation with UNICEF and UNESCO.

7. Special protection measures

Economic exploitation

472. The Committee expresses concern at the absence of adequate labour laws to protect children from economic exploitation. In the light of the increasing number of school drop-outs, the lack of a minimum age for employment and the increasing number of children living and/or working on the streets, the Committee is concerned about the lack of information and adequate data on the situation of child labour and economic exploitation in the State party.

473. In the light of article 32 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party enact legislation to protect children from economic exploitation and introduce appropriate monitoring mechanisms to ensure the enforcement of such laws, including in the informal sector. It is further recommended that the State party undertake a

comprehensive study to assess the situation with regard to child labour. The Committee encourages the State party to consider ratifying ILO Convention No. 138 concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment and ILO Convention No. 182 concerning the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

Drug abuse

474. The Committee is concerned at the high incidence of drug, alcohol and substance abuse (including the use of betelnut) among young people and the limited psychological, social and medical programmes and services available in this regard.

475. In the light of article 33 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures, including administrative, social and educational measures, to protect children from the illicit use of alcohol, narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and to prevent the use of children in the illicit production and trafficking of such substances. It encourages the State party to strengthen its efforts to implement rehabilitation programmes dealing with child victims of alcohol, drug and substance abuse. In this regard, the Committee encourages the State party to consider seeking technical assistance from, inter alia, UNICEF, WHO and the United Nations International Narcotics Control Board.

Sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (art. 34)

476. The Committee expresses its concern about the inadequate legal protection of children, particularly boys, against commercial sexual exploitation, including prostitution and pornography. Concern is also expressed at the insufficient programmes for the physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of child victims of such abuse and exploitation.

477. In the light of article 34 and other related articles of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures to ensure adequate legal protection of children, including boys, against commercial sexual exploitation and pornography. The Committee recommends that the State party undertake all appropriate measures to ensure the non-stigmatization and non-criminalization of child victims of sexual abuse and exploitation. Additionally, it is recommended that the State party undertake studies with a view to understanding the scope of the problem and implementing appropriate policies and measures, including the physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of child victims. The Committee recommends that the State party take into account the recommendations formulated in the Agenda for Action adopted at the 1996 Stockholm World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and that it raise the age for protection against commercial sexual exploitation to 18 years.

Administration of juvenile justice

478. While the Committee notes the efforts of the State party in the area of juvenile justice, including the recent development, by the judiciary, of a programme that allows for alternative hearings for juveniles by the Minister of Justice, it is concerned that additional efforts are needed in this regard.

479. The Committee recommends that the State party take all effective measures to implement a juvenile justice system in conformity with the Convention, in particular articles 37, 40 and 39, and of other United Nations standards in this field, such as the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (the Beijing Rules), the United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency (the Riyadh Guidelines) and the United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty. The Committee also recommends that the State party establish social services to support judges and guarantee the rights of children (especially the right to a fair hearing) in traditional disciplinary measures. The Committee further recommends that the State party consider seeking technical assistance from, inter alia, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Centre for International Crime Prevention, the International Network on Juvenile Justice and UNICEF, through the Coordination Panel on Technical Assistance and Advice in Juvenile Justice.

1. Ratification of the Optional Protocols

480. While noting that the State party does not have an army or military service, **the Committee recommends that the State party consider signing and ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict. The Committee also recommends that the State party consider signing and ratifying the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.**

2. Dissemination of reports

481. Finally, **the Committee recommends that, in the light of article 44, paragraph 6, of the Convention, the initial report and written replies presented by the State party be made widely available to the public at large and that publication of the report be considered, along with the relevant summary records and the concluding observations adopted thereon by the Committee. Such a document should be widely distributed in order to generate debate and awareness of the Convention and its implementation and monitoring within the Government and the general public, including NGOs.**

Dominican Republic

482. The Committee considered the initial report of the Dominican Republic (CRC/C/8/Add.40), received on 1 December 1998, and its supplementary report (CRC/C/8/Add.44), received on 13 December 2000, at its 693rd and 694th meetings (see CRC/C/SR.693-694), held on 24 January 2001 and adopted* the following concluding observations.

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* At the 697th meeting, held on 26 January 2001.

A. Introduction

483. While the Committee welcomes the State party's initial report, it regrets its late submission and that it does not follow the guidelines established by the Committee. The Committee welcomes the written replies to its list of issues (CRC/C/Q/DOMREP/1) and the supplementary report (CRC/C/8/Add.44), which allowed for a clearer understanding of the situation of children in the State party. The Committee is encouraged by the constructive and open dialogue it had with the State party, whose delegation covered the major issues of the Convention, and also welcomes the positive reactions to the suggestions and recommendations made during the discussion.

B. Positive aspects

484. The enactment of children's rights related legislation such as Law 14-94, also known as the Code for the Protection of Children and Adolescents (1994), the General Law on Education (1997), the Law against Family Violence (1997), the General Law for Youth (2000) and the General Law on Disabilities (2000) are regarded as positive steps for the implementation of the Convention in the State party.

485. The Committee welcomes the ratification of ILO Convention No. 138 concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment and ILO Convention No. 182 concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (1999).

486. The Committee notes the establishment of special courts (tribunals and appeal courts) for children and adolescents and of the Supreme Court of Juvenile Justice within the Supreme Court.

487. The Committee also notes the signing (1996) of a memorandum of understanding between the State party and the International Labour Organization/IPEC as well as the establishment of the National Committee for the Eradication of Child Labour.

C. Factors and difficulties impeding the implementation of the Convention

488. Concern is expressed that widespread poverty and long-standing economic and social disparities are affecting the most vulnerable groups, including children, and hampering the enjoyment of the rights of the child in the State party.

D. Principal subjects of concern and recommendations

1. General measures of implementation

Legislation

489. While the Committee welcomes the enactment of Law 14-94 (Code for the Protection of Children and Adolescents) and notes the measures taken by the State party in preparation for the implementation of this law, it remains concerned about the lack of a comprehensive policy, including the required financial and human resources, and administrative reform, necessary for the full implementation of this legislation.

490. The Committee recommends that the State party complete, as a matter of priority, the implementation of Law 14-94 (Code for the Protection of Children and Adolescents). The Committee further recommends that the State party take effective measures, including the allocation, to the maximum extent, of available resources, both financial and human, for the full implementation of this legislation.

Coordination

491. While the Committee notes of the establishment of the Governing Body (Organismo Rector) as the institution in charge of ensuring the coordination of governmental bodies working to implement the Convention, it remains concerned about the limited capacity and resources of this Body to fulfil its mandate in a proper manner. The Committee is also concerned about the weak inter-institutional coordination and the duplication of action and functions. The Committee is further concerned at the low interaction and dialogue between the Governing Body and NGOs.

492. The Committee recommends that the State party take all measures to strengthen the coordinating role of the Governing Body to enable it to fulfil its mandate in an effective manner at the national, regional and local levels. Furthermore, the Committee recommends that the State party guarantee broader participation of civil society and non-governmental organizations in the Governing Body and effective cooperation with other national Councils (CONANI, CONAPLUVI, CONADIS, etc.).

Data collection and monitoring

493. The Committee expresses its concern at the lack of a data collection system covering all areas of the Convention and the lack of a system for monitoring compliance with the Convention. In particular, the Committee is concerned about the fact that children of Haitian origin born in the State party's territory or belonging to Haitian migrant families have not been included in the 1996 census and that statistics are very limited concerning children in conflict with the law.

494. The Committee recommends that the State party continue to develop and strengthen its data collection system, with a view to covering all areas of the Convention. Such a system should cover all children under 18 years of age, with specific emphasis on vulnerable groups of children, including children of Haitian origin born in the State party's territory or belonging to Haitian migrant families, as a basis for assessing the progress achieved in the realization of children's rights and in order to help design policies for better implementation of the provisions of the Convention.

495. The Committee further recommends that the State party establish an independent and effective system for monitoring compliance with the Convention, with a view to assessing progress achieved in the realization of children's rights and to evaluating policies for better implementation of the provisions of the Convention. In this regard, the Committee encourages the State party to seek international assistance from, inter alia, UNICEF.

Budget and financial resources for children

496. The Committee expresses its concern at the limited budget allocations and mobilization for the social sector, in particular for those areas addressing the needs of the most vulnerable groups of children, and also to support community activities (child rights committees, child friendly municipalities) in the protection of the rights of the child. Furthermore, concern is expressed at the lack of specific disaggregated data on national budget allocations to meet the needs of children.

497. The Committee reiterates its recommendation that all measures to implement economic, social and cultural rights should be undertaken "to the maximum extent of ... available resources" in the light of articles 2, 3 and 4 of the Convention and that particular attention be paid to effective budget mobilization and allocation, in particular for the protection of children belonging to vulnerable and marginalized groups. The Committee further recommends that the State party develop a locally based system to monitor and evaluate the situation of children living in areas of extreme poverty, in order to make priority budget allocations for these groups of children.

Dissemination of the Convention

498. While aware of the measures undertaken to promote widespread awareness of the principles and provisions of the Convention, the Committee is of the opinion that these measures need to be strengthened. While acknowledging the existence of specific training for judges, the Committee is concerned that current training programmes for professionals working with and for children do not reach all such groups.

499. The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to disseminate the principles and provisions of the Convention as a measure to sensitize society about children's rights through social mobilization. Special emphasis should be placed on the dissemination of the Convention among minority groups, as well as in rural and remote areas. The Committee encourages the State party to consider seeking technical assistance in this area from, inter alia, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and UNICEF.

500. The Committee encourages the State party to continue providing systematic education and training on the provisions of the Convention for all professional groups working with and for children, in particular parliamentarians, judges, lawyers, law enforcement officials, civil servants, municipal workers, personnel working in institutions and places of detention for children, teachers, health personnel, including psychologists, and social workers. Technical assistance from, inter alia, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and UNICEF could be requested in this regard.

2. Definition of the child

501. While noting the current review of the legislation on this issue, the Committee expresses its concern at the different minimum legal age for marriage with parental consent for girls (15 years) and for boys (16 years).

502. The Committee recommends that the State party raise and equalize the minimum legal age for marriage for boys and girls.

3. General principles

Non-discrimination

503. The Committee is deeply concerned at the discrimination against children of Haitian origin born in the State party's territory or belonging to Haitian migrant families, especially their limited access to housing, education and health services, and notes in particular the lack of specifically targeted measures to address this problem. Furthermore, concern is expressed at the existing patterns of economic and social disparities, and at gender and racial discrimination.

504. In the light of article 2 and other related articles of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party take, as a matter of priority, effective measures to ensure that children of Haitian origin born in the State party's territory or belonging to Haitian migrant families have the same access to housing, education and health services as other children. The Committee also recommends that the State party strengthen and increase measures to reduce economic and social disparities, including between urban and rural areas; to prevent discrimination against the most disadvantaged groups of children, such as girls, children with disabilities, children living in and/or working on the streets; and children living in rural areas; and to guarantee their full enjoyment of all the rights as recognized in the Convention.

Best interests of the child and respect for the views of the child

505. The Committee is concerned that two general principles of the Convention, as laid down in articles 3 (best interests of the child) and 12 (respect of the views of the child), are not fully applied and duly integrated into the implementation of the policies and programmes of the State party.

506. The Committee recommends that further efforts be made to ensure the implementation of the principles of the "best interests of the child" and "respect for the views of the child", especially his or her rights to participate in the family, at school, within other institutions and in society in general in order to empower children to their fullest development and dignity. These principles should also be reflected in all policies and programmes relating to children. Awareness raising among the public at large, including community leaders, as well as educational programmes on the implementation of these principles should be reinforced in order to change traditional perceptions of children as objects rather than subjects of rights.

4. Civil rights and freedoms

Birth registration

507. While the Committee takes note of the State party's efforts in the area of birth registration, it remains concerned that a large percentage of children are not registered and are

not provided with identity cards, thus preventing them from enjoying their rights fully. In particular, concern is expressed about the situation of children of Haitian origin or belonging to Haitian migrant families whose right to birth registration has been denied in the State party. As a result of this policy, those children have not been able to enjoy fully their rights, such as to access to health care and education.

508. In the light of article 7 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party strengthen and increase its measures to ensure the immediate registration of the birth of all children. Special emphasis should be placed on the registration of children belonging to the most vulnerable groups, including children of Haitian origin or belonging to Haitian migrant families.

Ill-treatment

509. While noting the clear legislative prohibition of all forms of torture, the Committee expresses its concern about the persistent allegations that children are detained in conditions which amount to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, and of children being physically ill-treated by members of the police force.

510. In the light of article 37 and other related articles of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party use effectively its judicial mechanisms to deal with complaints of police brutality, ill-treatment and abuse of children, and that cases of violence against and abuse of children be duly investigated in order to avoid impunity for the perpetrators. The Committee encourages the State party to consider ratifying the 1984 Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

5. Family environment and alternative care

Children deprived of family environment

511. The Committee remains deeply concerned at the weakness of family links, at the large numbers of children who have been deprived of a family environment and, in particular at reports regarding: difficulties and slow progress in tracing separated families and children; the lack of adequate mechanisms of protection for children living in institutions; the placement of children in institutions for long periods; and the predominant use of placement in institutions in preference to the development of alternative care measures (e.g., adoption and foster care).

512. The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen and increase its programmes, in collaboration with relevant NGOs, to support families in need, in particular single parent families and those in socio-economic or other difficult circumstances, such as very young couples with children. The Committee also recommends that the State party develop programmes to facilitate alternative care, in particular foster care, provide additional training for social and welfare workers, and establish independent complaint and monitoring mechanisms for alternative care institutions. The Committee urges the State party to make every effort to strengthen

family tracing programmes and to increase its efforts to provide support, including training for parents, to discourage the abandonment of children. The Committee further recommends that the State party ensure adequate periodic review of placement of children living in institutions, and establish an independent and easily accessible complaint monitoring mechanism for those children.

513. The Committee encourages the State party to ratify the Hague Convention of 1993 on the Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Inter-country Adoption, as well as bilateral agreements.

Protection from abuse and neglect

514. While the Committee welcomes the adoption of special legislation criminalizing domestic violence, the designation of April as the Month of Child Abuse Prevention and the creation of a hotline for abused children, it expresses its concern that physical and sexual abuse - within and outside the family - widely exist in society. Concern is also expressed at the insufficient allocation of resources, both financial and human, as well as at the lack of adequately trained personnel to prevent and combat such abuse. The insufficiency of rehabilitation measures and facilities for victims and their limited access to justice are also matters of concern.

515. In the light of articles 19 and 39 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party take effective measures, including reinforcing current multi-disciplinary programmes and rehabilitation measures, to prevent and combat child abuse and ill-treatment of children within the family, at school and in society at large. It suggests that law enforcement should be strengthened with respect to such crimes; adequate procedures and mechanisms to deal with complaints of child abuse should be reinforced in order to provide children with prompt access to justice and to avoid impunity for the offenders. Furthermore, educational programmes should be established to combat traditional attitudes within society regarding this issue. The Committee encourages the State party to consider seeking international cooperation to this effect from, inter alia, UNICEF.

6. Basic health and welfare

516. While taking note of the State party's achievements in the area of basic health and welfare, the Committee is concerned about the very high infant and under-five mortality rates as well as at the prevalence of malnutrition among children. Concern is also expressed at the limited access to health centres, in particular in rural areas. The persistence of health problems related to insufficient access to safe water and sanitation are also matters of concern.

517. The Committee recommends that the State party continue taking all appropriate measures to improve the health infrastructure, including through international cooperation, to ensure access to basic health care and services for all children and to increase access to safe drinking water and sanitation. More concerted efforts need to be taken to combat malnutrition and to ensure the adoption and implementation of a national nutritional policy and action plan for children. The Committee further recommends that

the State party undertake initiatives related to the reduction of infant mortality such as the "Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses" (IMCI), a joint programme of the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF.

Adolescent health

518. The Committee expresses its concern at the high teenage pregnancy and maternal mortality rates; at the insufficient access by teenagers to reproductive health and sexual education and counselling services, including outside schools; at the increasing rate of HIV/AIDS, STDs and drug and substance abuse (e.g., glue-sniffing) among children and adolescents; and at the lack of information on mental health.

519. The Committee suggests that a comprehensive and multi-disciplinary study be undertaken to understand the scope of the phenomenon of adolescent health problems, especially early pregnancies and maternal mortality. The Committee recommends that the State party adopt comprehensive adolescent health policies and strengthen reproductive health and sexual education and counselling services. The Committee further recommends the State party to continue taking measures for the prevention of HIV/AIDS and to take into consideration the Committee's recommendations adopted on its Day of General Discussion on "Children living in a world with HIV/AIDS" (CRC/C/80). The Committee also recommends that further efforts, both financial and human, be undertaken for the development of child friendly counselling services, as well as care and rehabilitation facilities for adolescents. Measures to combat and prevent substance abuse among children should be strengthened. The Committee also recommends the development of mental health services.

Children with disabilities

520. While noting the adoption of the General Law on Disabilities (2000) and the creation of the National Council on Disability, the Committee is concerned at the lack of data on children with disabilities and the insufficient measures taken by the State party to ensure effective access of these children to health, education and social services, and to facilitate their full inclusion in society. The Committee is also concerned about the small number of well-trained professionals working with and for children with disabilities

521. In the light of the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (General Assembly resolution 48/96), the Committee recommends that the State party develop early identification programmes to prevent disabilities, implement alternatives to the institutionalization of disabled children, envisage awareness-raising campaigns to reduce discrimination against disabled children, promote their inclusion in regular education and society at large, and when necessary establish special education programmes and centres. The Committee further recommends that the State party seek technical cooperation for the training of professional staff working with and for children with disabilities. International cooperation from, inter alia, UNICEF and WHO can be sought to this effect.

7. Education, leisure and cultural activities

522. The Committee welcomes the State party's efforts in the field of education, in particular the inclusion of human rights' teaching, including children's rights, in the school curricula, but it remains concerned about the high drop-out and repetition rates in primary and secondary schools, disparities between urban and rural areas in terms of access to education and to quality education, the insufficient number of well-trained teaching staff and children's limited access to materials and text books. Concern is also expressed at various forms of discrimination and exclusion which still affect the right to education of certain groups of children, such as pregnant adolescents, unregistered children, children with disabilities and children of Haitian origin born in the State party's territory or belonging to Haitian migrant families, reflecting insufficient attention to article 29 of the Convention.

523. In the light of article 28 and other related articles of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party continue its efforts in the field of education by strengthening its policies and system in order: to improve on-going retention programmes and vocational training for drop-out students; to improve schools' infrastructure; to continue with curricular reform, including teaching methodologies; to eradicate regional disparities with reference to school enrolment and attendance; and to implement special education programmes taking into account the needs of vulnerable children. The Committee further recommends explicit inclusion of the aims of education as mentioned in article 29 of the Convention in the school curricula.

8. Special protection measures

Economic exploitation, including child labour

524. The Committee remains concerned that a large number of children are still involved in labour activities, particularly in the informal sector, including as domestic workers, in agriculture and in the family context. Concern is also expressed about the insufficient law enforcement and lack of adequate monitoring mechanisms to address this situation.

525. In the light of, inter alia, articles 3, 6 and 32 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party continue working in cooperation with ILO/IPEC for the establishment and implementation of a national plan for the elimination of child labour and undertake all the actions envisaged in the Memorandum of Understanding with ILO/IPEC (1996). The situation of children involved in hazardous labour, especially in the informal sector where the majority of working children are found, requires special attention. The Committee also recommends that the child labour laws be enforced, that labour inspectorates be strengthened and that penalties be imposed in cases of violation.

Children living and/or working on the streets

526. Concern is expressed at the large number of children living and/or working on the streets.

527. The Committee recommends that the State party develop a comprehensive policy to address this issue, including: adequate access to health care; rehabilitation services for physical, sexual and substance abuse; services for reconciliation with families; and education, as well as vocational and life-skills training. The Committee also recommends that the State party cooperate and coordinate its efforts with civil society in this regard and provide existing non-governmental programmes with more support.

Sexual exploitation

528. While noting the creation of the National Inter-Agency Commission for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Prostitution in Tourist Centres, the Committee expresses its concern at the absence of data and of a comprehensive study on the issue of sexual commercial exploitation and sexual abuse of children, as well as at the lack of implementation of the National Plan of Action to address this issue. In addition, the Committee expresses its deep concern at the increase of the number of children in the State party suffering from sexual commercial exploitation, apparently often related to sex tourism.

529. In the light of article 34 and other related articles of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party undertake studies with a view to strengthening current policies and measures, including care and rehabilitation policies and measures to prevent and combat this phenomenon. The Committee recommends that the State party take into account the recommendations formulated in the Agenda for Action adopted at the 1996 Stockholm World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children.

Administration of juvenile justice

530. With regard to the administration of the juvenile justice system, the Committee expresses its concern at the slow pace of implementation of the juvenile court system; at the lack of data on children involved in the juvenile justice system; at the conditions in specialized centres for children in conflict with the law; at the situation of children detained in prisons with adults; at the limited training programmes for professionals working in the juvenile justice system.

531. The Committee recommends that the State party continue undertaking effective measures to overcome all existing (see para. 47) obstacles to the full implementation of its juvenile justice system in accordance with the Convention, especially articles 37, 40 and 39, and other relevant international standards such as the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (the Beijing Rules), the United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency (the Riyadh Guidelines) and the United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty. In this regard, the Committee further suggests that the State party consider seeking technical assistance from, inter alia, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Centre for International Crime Prevention, the International Network on Juvenile Justice and UNICEF through the Coordination Panel on Technical Advice and Assistance in Juvenile Justice.

Optional Protocols

532. The Committee encourages the State party to ratify and implement the Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and on the involvement of children in armed conflict.

Dissemination of the reports (art. 44)

533. Finally, in the light of article 44, paragraph 6, of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the initial report and written replies submitted by the State party be made widely available to the public at large and that the publication of the report be considered, along with the relevant summary records and concluding observations adopted thereon by the Committee. Such a document should be widely distributed in order to generate debate and awareness of the Convention, its implementation and monitoring within the Government, the Parliament and the general public, including concerned non-governmental organizations.

III. INTER-SESSIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMITTEE

534. During the session, the Committee was informed by members about various meetings in which they had participated.

535. Mrs. Ouedraogo had been invited by the Djibouti authorities and UNICEF to participate in a mission to Djibouti from 16 to 22 November 2000. She attended the celebration of the Day of the Djibouti Child on 20 November 2000. The objective of the mission was to follow-up the consideration of the initial report of Djibouti and advocate in favour of child rights with the authorities and persons involved in the implementation of the Convention, including NGOs. Mrs. Ouedraogo visited youth homes, schools, orphanages and day-care projects supervised by women.

536. On the occasion of the French youth book fair, Mrs. Ouedraogo was invited to Dakar from 27 November to 2 December 2000 to participate in a video-conference to discuss the issue of violence against children. She attended the discussion on the novel Allah n'est pas obligé by Amadou Kourouma, relating to child soldiers. During her visit Mrs. Ouedraogo visited programmes undertaken by Enda-Ecopole aimed at promoting education and career prospects of children from disadvantaged families.

537. From 22 to 25 October 2000, Mr. Doek attended as a resource person/expert a seminar in Jinja (Uganda) on "Strategy development and training in the administration of juvenile justice" and gave a presentation on "International law, children's rights and juvenile justice: from paper to practice". The seminar was co-organized by Defence for Children and OHCHR, within the framework of the United Nations Coordination Panel on Technical Advice and Assistance in Juvenile Justice, in collaboration with UNICEF-Uganda and various national organizations.

538. On 26 and 27 October, Mr. Doek participated in the annual meeting of the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children (ENOC) in Brussels where he discussed with the participants the Ombudspersons' involvement in the CRC reporting process.

539. From 12 to 15 November 2000, Mr. Doek attended a regional seminar in Riga on "Pre-trial detention in Central and East European and CIS countries", where he gave a presentation as a member of a panel on pre-trial detention. The seminar was organized by the Constitutional and Legal Policy Institute (Hungary).

540. On 20 and 21 November, Mr. Doek participated in Yerevan in a seminar organized by UNICEF Armenia and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on "The Convention on the Rights of the Child: reporting mechanisms The United Nations Special Session on Children". He gave presentations on "The historical background of the Convention and the Committee" and on "Reporting implementation mechanisms of the Convention/link to the concluding observations of the Committee".

541. On 23 and 24 November he took part in an expert meeting on "Aims of Education" in Stockholm organized by Save the Children-Sweden. The meeting was intended as an input to the drafting of the Committee's first general comment on article 29, paragraph 1, of the Convention.

542. From 26 to 29 November Mr. Doek attended an international conference on "Violence in the family, plan of action for the 21st century" held in Nicosia where he spoke on "Family violence and the law". In that same period he also attended, on behalf of the Committee, parts of the workshop on juvenile justice of the Council of Europe programme for children, "Children at the dawn of a new millennium".

543. On 30 November 2000, he gave a presentation at an international colloquium on "A developmental approach to anti-social behaviour" held in Amsterdam. He spoke on "Policy implications of developmental research into anti-social behaviour". On 1 December he spoke on "In the best interest of the child" at a national symposium about prevention of chronic anti-social behaviour of juveniles held in Amsterdam.

544. In the Dominican Republic a special meeting of governmental and NGO representatives was organized on 14 December at which Mr. Doek briefed the participants about the dialogue with the Committee and the importance of concluding observations. He also met with the First Lady of the Dominican Republic, Mrs. Rosa Gomez de Meja, who informed him about the various children's programmes she is involved in.

545. From 26 to 30 December, Mr. Doek attended the Indian National Conference on Human Rights, Social Movements, Globalization and the Law in Panchgani, organized by the India Centre for Human Rights and Law in collaboration with many other NGOs. At the two-day workshop on "Child abuse and the law" he gave a presentation on "Child (sexual) abuse and the law: Dutch experiences" and on "The Committee and concluding observations", in particular the concluding observations on India adopted by the Committee on 28 January 2000 (CRC/15/Add. 115).

546. Mr. Rabah reported that he participated in the "Health and humanitarian action inaugural symposium" organized by the International Association for Humanitarian Medicine from 17 to 18 November 2000 in Palermo (Italy).

547. Mr. Rabah also participated in training sessions in Amman on 8 and 9 December 2000, on, inter alia, the "Specific features of criminal responsibility of juveniles". Forty judges from Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and Jordan participated in this event.

548. Mrs. Mokhuane participated in a conference entitled "Inclusive societies: benefits for children", held from 22 to 27 October 2000 in Edmonton, Alberta (Canada), organized by the Canadian Association for Community Living. This international conference was attended by a wide spectrum of persons from around the world dealing specifically with the disabled. Government officials were represented, as well as educators, health personnel, NGOs and other members of civil society. The approach adopted by the conference was a rights-based approach with the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child used as a framework to address rights of the disabled.

549. Mrs. Mokhuane also attended a conference entitled "Quality protects - in practice", held on 9 November 2000 in London, and organized by the Ministry of Health. The conference focused on the various ways in which children in families and those in alternative care should be taken care of, emphasizing the rights-based approach and evaluation of the services rendered. Mrs. Mokhuane gave a general presentation on children's rights.

550. Mrs. Sardenberg participated in the Regional Conference of the Americas for the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, organized in Santagio de Chile from 5 to 7 December 2000. Participants at the meeting adopted a declaration and a plan of action.

551. Mrs. Sardenberg also participated in a national seminar on "Elimination of corporal punishment of children" held in Brazilia on 8 November 2000, sponsored by the Commission on Human Rights in the Chamber of Deputies of the Brazilian Congress. She gave a presentation on the Committee's position on corporal punishment within the framework of the Convention.

552. Mrs. Karp gave a keynote address on "Domestic violence and the Convention on the Rights of the Child" at an interregional annual conference of the Kiwanis Club held in Milan on 24 September 2000.

553. Mrs. Karp also participated in an expert meeting on "The aims of education" organized in Stockholm by Save the Children-Sweden (23-24 November 2000). The meeting served as an input to the drafting process of the Committee's general comment on article 29.1 of the Convention.

IV. COOPERATION WITH UNITED NATIONS AND OTHER COMPETENT BODIES

554. At its 695th meeting, held on 25 January 2001, the Committee adopted a statement addressed to the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the General Assembly Special Session on Children (see annex X).

555. During the pre-sessional working group, the Committee held various meetings with United Nations bodies and specialized agencies, as well as other competent bodies, in the framework of its ongoing dialogue and interaction with these bodies in the light of article 45 of the Convention.

556. On 10 October 2000, the Committee on the Rights of the Child met with Jean-Francois Noel, Legal Adviser for the International Bureau for Children's Rights, to discuss the work of the International Bureau in promoting and protecting the rights of children as well as possible avenues to enhance cooperation between the Committee and the International Bureau. It was noted that Mrs. Karp had been invited, as an independent expert, to contribute to the work of the International Bureau.

557. Mr. Noel indicated that the main intervention mechanism for the International Bureau was the International Tribunal for Children's Rights, which coordinated the interventions of judges, lawyers, criminologists, investigators and human rights experts working specifically on issues relating to the rights of children. The International Tribunal consisted of five judges representing different legal systems and provided a forum where Governments, NGOs and other representatives of civil society, including children, could express their concerns and ideas for a more effective implementation of children's rights. The main focus of the International Bureau and the International Tribunal during the period 1996-1999 was the issue of sexual exploitation of children, specifically its international dimensions. The future focus of the International Bureau would be the protection of war-affected children and children in armed conflict.

558. During the session, the Committee held various meetings with United Nations bodies and specialized agencies, as well as other competent bodies, in the framework of its ongoing dialogue and interaction with these bodies in the light of article 45 of the Convention.

559. At its 677th meeting, held on 12 January 2001, the Committee held its regular meeting with partners working in the field of children's rights. UNICEF provided an update on the Global Movement for Children, noting that a 10-point agenda (Rallying Call) would be launched to mobilize the public to participate in the movement. The UNICEF representative indicated that the catalysts of the global movement were the Special Session on Children; an initiative, Say Yes For Children, scheduled for March-September 2001; and the mobilization of partners and personalities. In this regard, she underlined the support already given to the movement by Nelson Mandela and Graça Machel. The representative drew particular attention to the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the Special Session on Children and the European regional consultation for that meeting, which was to take place in Berlin from 16 to 18 May 2001.

560. The ILO representative provided an update on the status of ratification of ILO conventions relevant to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (No. 182) recorded the fastest rate of ratification in the 80 years of ILO's existence. This success was said to result from the avid ratification campaign undertaken by the organization as well as its ongoing cooperation with partners and was positively reflected in an increase in ratifications of ILO Convention No. 138 concerning Minimum Age for Access to Employment.

561. The International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) has reinforced the linkage of the promotion of ratification and implementation of the conventions with the technical assistance provided through projects and advisory services. At the same time, it has also sought to confirm a more comprehensive view of child labour. The representative noted that ILO had developed a Time Bound Programme (TBP) within IPEC which should accelerate the process of eradicating the worst forms of child labour by linking the action against child labour to the national development effort as a whole. A draft methodological guide on TBP had been prepared.

562. With reference to the Special Session on Children, the ILO representative indicated that efforts were being made to ensure that child labour was adequately reflected in the outcome document.

563. The representative of WHO noted that WHO had conducted two regional workshops for its staff in the European and the South-East Asia offices on the incorporation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child into the work of WHO. Those workshops were considered field tests and were expected to provide a better understanding of how WHO should proceed in promoting and including child rights in its work. Follow-up plans were under way and were expected to include a workshop for India as well as a national workshop for Indonesia.

564. It was noted that WHO had also developed a staff training kit to facilitate the incorporation of the Convention into its work. This kit was expected to be finalized and available for distribution to the Committee during its next session scheduled for May/June 2001.

565. The representative also briefly touched upon the involvement of WHO in the preparatory process for the Special Session. He indicated that discussions were under way to strengthen the health component of the outcome document.

566. The representative of the NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child said that a child rights caucus had been set up to give priority to child rights during the Special Session. The caucus had met and continued to communicate through an active "mailnet", which involved more than 150 individuals and NGOs. She stated that a child rights agenda, with a focus on special protection measures, had been established, inter alia to serve as a basis for discussion with Governments. The representative stressed the importance of ensuring that the outcome of the Special Session was linked to the Convention and its monitoring process. She concluded by stating that the child rights caucus was preparing an alternative outcome document to be discussed during the upcoming Preparatory Committee meeting.

567. The representative of the NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child - Focal Point on Sexual Exploitation of Children provided an update on the preparatory process of the Second World Congress against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children to be held from 17 to 20 December 2001 in Yokohama, Japan. The main themes for discussion during the Congress included trafficking, legislation and law enforcement, prevention and recovery, the profile of the exploiter, child pornography and the involvement of the private sector, especially the travel industry. Additional topics for consideration included racism and HIV/AIDS.

568. On 16 January 2001, the Committee met with representatives of the European Network of Ombudsmen for Children (ENOC) to discuss the role of children's ombudspersons/national human rights institutions in the reporting process. Representatives of ENOC included Ms. Ankie Vanderkerckhove, Child Rights Commissioner of the Flemish Parliament; Ms. Louise Sylwander, Swedish Ombudsman for Children and Young Persons (outgoing); and Peter Newell (consultant).

569. The representative of ENOC thanked the Committee for its efforts, mainly through its concluding observations and recommendations, in encouraging State parties to the Convention to consider the establishment and/or strengthening of independent national human rights institutions.

570. ENOC stressed the importance of ensuring that the work done by national human rights institutions in promoting and protecting children's rights was accessible to the Committee. It made several proposals as to how this could be done most effectively. In this connection, ENOC welcomed and encouraged a continuation of the Committee's initiative in inviting national human rights institutions to participate in its pre-sessional working group meetings. The representatives emphasized the importance of ensuring that national human rights institutions maintained an independent role in the reporting process established under the Convention.

571. The Committee expressed appreciation for the suggestions made by ENOC and reiterated its commitment to promoting and cooperating with independent child-focused national human rights institutions, such as children's ombudspersons, commissioners or focal points within national human rights institutions.

572. On 22 January 2001, the Committee also met with the members of the Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss common interests and possible cooperation between the two bodies. It was noted that the purpose of the Fund was to assist representatives of NGOs from various regions dealing with issues of contemporary forms of slavery to participate in the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery. The assistance offered to NGOs was mainly financial and targeted towards grass-roots/local NGOs. It was also stated that the Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery also extends humanitarian, legal and financial aid to individuals whose human rights had been violated as a result of contemporary forms of slavery. Funds were obtained through voluntary contributions from Governments, NGOs and other private and public entities. As child labour was identified as one of the priority areas for the Fund, the participants discussed the possibility of cooperation in this area, including through the sharing of information. Participants further discussed the possibility of encouraging and facilitating NGOs, identified by the Fund, to participate in the working group of the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

573. On 22 January 2001, the Committee met with 10 Youth Ambassadors from Hong Kong to discuss the role which children and youth could play in implementing the Convention on the Rights of the Child in Hong Kong. The main focus of the discussion was a proposal put forward by the Youth Ambassadors to establish a Children's Commission in Hong Kong. The group suggested that children should be included among the membership of the Commission, allowing them the opportunity to become more directly involved in the implementation of the Convention and in promoting issues relevant to them. It was noted that Hong Kong had already established commissions for youth (ages 15-24 years), women, and senior citizens.

V. FUTURE THEMATIC DEBATE

574. At its 678th meeting, held on 12 January 2001, the Committee discussed and adopted its outline for the future thematic debate on "Violence against children within the family and at school" (see annex VIII) scheduled to take place during its twenty-eighth session (28 September 2001).

VI. GENERAL COMMENTS

575. At its 695th meeting, held on 25 January 2001, the Committee adopted its first general comment on article 29.1 (aims of education) of the Convention (see annex IX).

VII. DRAFT PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE TWENTY-SEVENTH SESSION

576. The following is the draft provisional agenda for the twenty-seventh session of the Committee:

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Organizational matters.
3. Submission of reports by States parties.
4. Consideration of reports of States parties.
5. Cooperation with other United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and other competent bodies.
6. Methods of work of the Committee.
7. General comments.
8. Future meetings.
9. Other matters.

VIII. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

577. At its 697th meeting, held on 26 January 2001 the Committee considered the draft report on its twenty-sixth session. The report was adopted unanimously by the Committee.

Annex I

STATES WHICH HAVE RATIFIED OR ACCEDED TO THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD AS AT 26 JANUARY 2001 (191)

States	Date of signature	Date of receipt of instrument of ratification/ accession[a]	Date of entry into force
Afghanistan	27 September 1990	28 March 1994	27 April 1994
Albania	26 January 1990	27 February 1992	28 March 1992
Algeria	26 January 1990	16 April 1993	16 May 1993
Andorra	2 October 1995	2 January 1996	1 February 1996
Angola	14 February 1990	5 December 1990	4 January 1991
Antigua and Barbuda	12 March 1991	5 October 1993	4 November 1993
Argentina	29 June 1990	4 December 1990	3 January 1991
Armenia		23 June 1993[a]	22 July 1993
Australia	22 August 1990	17 December 1990	16 January 1991
Austria	26 January 1990	6 August 1992	5 September 1992
Azerbaijan		13 August 1992[a]	12 September 1992
Bahamas	30 October 1990	20 February 1991	22 March 1991
Bahrain		13 February 1992[a]	14 March 1992
Bangladesh	26 January 1990	3 August 1990	2 September 1990
Barbados	19 April 1990	9 October 1990	8 November 1990
Belarus	26 January 1990	1 October 1990	31 October 1990
Belgium	26 January 1990	16 December 1991	15 January 1992
Belize	2 March 1990	2 May 1990	2 September 1990
Benin	25 April 1990	3 August 1990	2 September 1990
Bhutan	4 June 1990	1 August 1990	2 September 1990
Bolivia	8 March 1990	26 June 1990	2 September 1990
Bosnia and Herzegovina[b]			6 March 1992
Botswana		14 March 1995[a]	13 April 1995
Brazil	26 January 1990	24 September 1990	24 October 1990
Brunei Darussalam		27 December 1995[a]	26 January 1996
Bulgaria	31 May 1990	3 June 1991	3 July 1991
Burkina Faso	26 January 1990	31 August 1990	30 September 1990
Burundi	8 May 1990	19 October 1990	18 November 1990
Cambodia	22 September 1992	15 October 1992	14 November 1992
Cameroon	25 September 1990	11 January 1993	10 February 1993

[a] Accession.

[b] Succession.

States	Date of signature	Date of receipt of instrument of ratification/ accession[a]	Date of entry into force
Canada	28 May 1990	13 December 1991	12 January 1992
Cape Verde		4 June 1992[a]	4 July 1992
Central African Republic	30 July 1990	23 April 1992	23 May 1992
Chad	30 September 1990	2 October 1990	1 November 1990
Chile	26 January 1990	13 August 1990	12 September 1990
China	29 August 1990	2 March 1992	1 April 1992
Colombia	26 January 1990	28 January 1991	27 February 1991
Comoros	30 September 1990	22 June 1993	21 July 1993
Congo		14 October 1993[a]	13 November 1993
Cook Islands		6 June 1997[a]	6 July 1997
Costa Rica	26 January 1990	21 August 1990	20 September 1990
Côte d'Ivoire	26 January 1990	4 February 1991	6 March 1991
Croatia[b]			8 October 1991
Cuba	26 January 1990	21 August 1991	20 September 1991
Cyprus	5 October 1990	7 February 1991	9 March 1991
Czech Republic[b]			1 January 1993
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	23 August 1990	21 September 1990	21 October 1990
Democratic Republic of Congo	20 March 1990	27 September 1990	27 October 1990
Denmark	26 January 1990	19 July 1991	18 August 1991
Djibouti	30 September 1990	6 December 1990	5 January 1991
Dominica	26 January 1990	13 March 1991	12 April 1991
Dominican Republic	8 August 1990	11 June 1991	11 July 1991
Ecuador	26 January 1990	23 March 1990	2 September 1990
Egypt	5 February 1990	6 July 1990	2 September 1990
El Salvador	26 January 1990	10 July 1990	2 September 1990
Equatorial Guinea		15 June 1992[a]	15 July 1992
Eritrea	20 December 1993	3 August 1994	2 September 1994
Estonia		21 October 1991[a]	20 November 1991
Ethiopia		14 May 1991[a]	13 June 1991
Fiji	2 July 1993	13 August 1993	12 September 1993
Finland	26 January 1990	20 June 1991	20 July 1991
France	26 January 1990	7 August 1990	6 September 1990
Gabon	26 January 1990	9 February 1994	11 March 1994
Gambia	5 February 1990	8 August 1990	7 September 1990
Georgia		2 June 1994[a]	2 July 1994

States	Date of Signature	Date of receipt of instrument of ratification/ accession[a]	Date of entry into force
Germany	26 January 1990	6 March 1992	5 April 1992
Ghana	29 January 1990	5 February 1990	2 September 1990
Greece	26 January 1990	11 May 1993	10 June 1993
Grenada	21 February 1990	5 November 1990	5 December 1990
Guatemala	26 January 1990	6 June 1990	2 September 1990
Guinea		13 July 1990[a]	2 September 1990
Guinea-Bissau	26 January 1990	20 August 1990	19 September 1990
Guyana	30 September 1990	14 January 1991	13 February 1991
Haiti	20 January 1990	8 June 1995	8 July 1995
Holy See	20 April 1990	20 April 1990	2 September 1990
Honduras	31 May 1990	10 August 1990	9 September 1990
Hungary	14 March 1990	7 October 1991	6 November 1991
Iceland	26 January 1990	28 October 1992	27 November 1992
India		11 December 1992[a]	11 January 1993
Indonesia	26 January 1990	5 September 1990	5 October 1990
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	5 September 1991	13 July 1994	12 August 1994
Iraq		15 June 1994[a]	15 July 1994
Ireland	30 September 1990	28 September 1992	28 October 1992
Israel	3 July 1990	3 October 1991	2 November 1991
Italy	26 January 1990	5 September 1991	5 October 1991
Jamaica	26 January 1990	14 May 1991	13 June 1991
Japan	21 September 1990	22 April 1994	22 May 1994
Jordan	29 August 1990	24 May 1991	23 June 1991
Kazakhstan	16 February 1994	12 August 1994	11 September 1994
Kenya	26 January 1990	30 July 1990	2 September 1990
Kiribati		11 December 1995[a]	10 January 1996
Kuwait	7 June 1990	21 October 1991	20 November 1991
Kyrgyzstan		7 October 1994	6 November 1994
Lao People's Democratic Republic		8 May 1991[a]	7 June 1991
Latvia		14 April 1992[a]	14 May 1992
Lebanon	26 January 1990	14 May 1991	13 June 1991
Lesotho	21 August 1990	10 March 1992	9 April 1992
Liberia	26 April 1990	4 June 1993	4 July 1993
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya		15 April 1993[a]	15 May 1993
Liechtenstein	30 September 1990	22 December 1995	21 January 1996

States	Date of Signature	Date of receipt of instrument of ratification/ accession[a]	Date of entry into force
Lithuania		31 January 1992[a]	1 March 1992
Luxembourg	21 March 1990	7 March 1994	6 April 1994
Madagascar	19 April 1990	19 March 1991	18 April 1991
Malawi		2 January 1991[a]	1 February 1991
Malaysia		17 February 1995[a]	19 March 1995
Maldives	21 August 1990	11 February 1991	13 March 1991
Mali	26 January 1990	20 September 1990	20 October 1990
Malta	26 January 1990	30 September 1990	30 October 1990
Marshall Islands	14 April 1993	4 October 1993	3 November 1993
Mauritania	26 January 1990	16 May 1991	15 June 1991
Mauritius		26 July 1990[a]	2 September 1990
Mexico	26 January 1990	21 September 1990	21 October 1990
Micronesia (Federated States of)		5 May 1993[a]	4 June 1993
Monaco		21 June 1993[a]	21 July 1993
Mongolia	26 January 1990	5 July 1990	2 September 1990
Morocco	26 January 1990	21 June 1993	21 July 1993
Mozambique	30 September 1990	26 April 1994	26 May 1994
Myanmar		15 July 1991[a]	14 August 1991
Namibia	26 September 1990	30 September 1990	30 October 1990
Nauru		27 July 1994[a]	26 August 1994
Nepal	26 January 1990	14 September 1990	14 October 1990
Netherlands	26 January 1990	6 February 1995	7 March 1995
New Zealand	1 October 1990	6 April 1993	6 May 1993
Nicaragua	6 February 1990	5 October 1990	4 November 1990
Niger	26 January 1990	30 September 1990	30 October 1990
Nigeria	26 January 1990	19 April 1991	19 May 1991
Niue		20 December 1995[a]	19 January 1996
Norway	26 January 1990	8 January 1991	7 February 1991
Oman		9 December 1996[a]	8 January 1997
Pakistan	20 September 1990	12 November 1990	12 December 1990
Palau		4 August 1995[a]	3 September 1995
Panama	26 January 1990	12 December 1990	11 January 1991
Papua New Guinea	30 September 1990	1 March 1993	31 March 1993
Paraguay	4 April 1990	25 September 1990	25 October 1990
Peru	26 January 1990	4 September 1990	4 October 1990

States	Date of signature	Date of receipt of instrument of ratification/ accession[a]	Date of entry into force
Philippines	26 January 1990	21 August 1990	20 September 1990
Poland	26 January 1990	7 June 1991	7 July 1991
Portugal	26 January 1990	21 September 1990	21 October 1990
Qatar	8 December 1992	3 April 1995	3 May 1995
Republic of Korea	25 September 1990	20 November 1991	20 December 1991
Republic of Moldova		26 January 1993[a]	25 February 1993
Romania	26 January 1990	28 September 1990	28 October 1990
Russian Federation	26 January 1990	16 August 1990	15 September 1990
Rwanda	26 January 1990	24 January 1991	23 February 1991
Saint Kitts and Nevis	26 January 1990	24 July 1990	2 September 1990
Saint Lucia		16 June 1993[a]	16 July 1993
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	20 September 1993	26 October 1993	25 November 1993
Samoa	30 September 1990	29 November 1994	29 December 1994
San Marino		25 November 1991[a]	25 December 1991
Sao Tome and Principe		14 May 1991[a]	13 June 1991
Saudi Arabia		26 January 1996[a]	25 February 1996
Senegal	26 January 1990	31 July 1990	2 September 1990
Seychelles		7 September 1990[a]	7 October 1990
Sierra Leone	13 February 1990	18 June 1990	2 September 1990
Singapore		5 October 1995[a]	4 November 1995
Slovakia[b]			1 January 1993
Slovenia[b]			25 June 1991
Solomon Islands		10 April 1995[a]	10 May 1995
South Africa	29 January 1993	16 June 1995	16 July 1995
Spain	26 January 1990	6 December 1990	5 January 1991
Sri Lanka	26 January 1990	12 July 1991	11 August 1991
Sudan	24 July 1990	3 August 1990	2 September 1990
Suriname	26 January 1990	1 March 1993	31 March 1993
Swaziland	22 August 1990	7 September 1995	6 October 1995
Sweden	26 January 1990	29 June 1990	2 September 1990
Switzerland	1 May 1991	24 February 1997	26 March 1997
Syrian Arab Republic	18 September 1990	15 July 1993	14 August 1993
Tajikistan		26 October 1993[a]	25 November 1993
Thailand		27 March 1992[a]	26 April 1992
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia[b]			17 September 1991

States	Date of Signature	Date of receipt of instrument of ratification/ accession[a]	Date of entry into force
Togo	26 January 1990	1 August 1990	2 September 1990
Tonga		6 November 1995[a]	6 December 1995
Trinidad and Tobago	30 September 1990	5 December 1991	4 January 1992
Tunisia	26 February 1990	30 January 1992	29 February 1992
Turkey	14 September 1990	4 April 1995	4 May 1995
Turkmenistan		20 September 1993[a]	19 October 1993
Tuvalu		22 September 1995[a]	22 October 1995
Uganda	17 August 1990	17 August 1990	16 September 1990
Ukraine	21 February 1991	28 August 1991	27 September 1991
United Arab Emirates		3 January 1997[a]	2 February 1997
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	19 April 1990	16 December 1991	15 January 1992
United Republic of Tanzania	1 June 1990	10 June 1991	10 July 1991
Uruguay	26 January 1990	20 November 1990	20 December 1990
Uzbekistan		29 June 1994[a]	29 July 1994
Vanuatu	30 September 1990	7 July 1993	6 August 1993
Venezuela	26 January 1990	13 September 1990	13 October 1990
Viet Nam	26 January 1990	28 February 1990	2 September 1990
Yemen	13 February 1990	1 May 1991	31 May 1991
Yugoslavia	26 January 1990	3 January 1991	2 February 1991
Zambia	30 September 1990	5 December 199 1	5 January 1992
Zimbabwe	8 March 1990	11 September 1990	11 October 1990

Annex II

STATES WHICH HAVE SIGNED OR RATIFIED THE OPTIONAL PROTOCOL TO THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD ON THE INVOLVEMENT OF CHILDREN IN ARMED CONFLICT AS AT 26 JANUARY 2001 (3)

(not yet entered into force)

States	Date of signature	Date of receipt of instrument of ratification/accession[a]
Andorra	7 September 2000	
Argentina	15 June 2000	
Austria	6 September 2000	
Azerbaijan	8 September 2000	
Bangladesh	6 September 2000	6 September 2000
Belgium	6 September 2000	
Belize	6 September 2000	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	7 September 2000	
Brazil	6 September 2000	
Cambodia	27 June 2000	
Canada	5 June 2000	7 July 2000
Colombia	6 September 2000	
Costa Rica	7 September 2000	
Cuba	13 October 2000	
Czech Republic	6 September 2000	
Democratic Republic of the Congo	8 September 2000	
Denmark	7 September 2000	
Ecuador	6 September 2000	
El Salvador	18 September 2000	
Finland	7 September 2000	
France	6 September 2000	
Gabon	8 September 2000	
Germany	6 September 2000	
Greece	7 September 2000	
Guatemala	7 September 2000	

States	Date of signature	Date of receipt of instrument of ratification/accession[a]
Guinea-Bissau	8 September 2000	
Holy See	10 October 2000	
Iceland	7 September 2000	
Ireland	7 September 2000	
Italy	6 September 2000	
Jamaica	8 September 2000	
Jordan	6 September 2000	
Kazakhstan	6 September 2000	
Kenya	8 September 2000	
Lesotho	6 September 2000	
Liechtenstein	8 September 2000	
Luxembourg	8 September 2000	
Madagascar	7 September 2000	
Malawi	7 September 2000	
Mali	8 September 2000	
Malta	7 September 2000	
Mexico	7 September 2000	
Monaco	26 June 2000	
Morocco	8 September 2000	
Namibia	8 September 2000	
Nauru	8 September 2000	
Nepal	8 September 2000	
Netherlands	7 September 2000	
New Zealand	7 September 2000	
Nigeria	8 September 2000	
Norway	13 June 2000	
Paraguay	13 September 2000	
Panama	31 October 2000	
Philippines	8 September 2000	
Portugal	6 September 2000	
Republic of Korea	6 September 2000	
Romania	6 September 2000	
San Marino	5 June 2000	
Senegal	8 September 2000	
Seychelles	23 January 2001	

States	Date of signature	Date of receipt of instrument of ratification/accession[a]
Sierra Leone	8 September 2000	
Singapore	7 September 2000	
Slovenia	8 September 2000	
Spain	6 September 2000	
Sri Lanka	21 August 2000	8 September 2000
Sweden	8 June 2000	
Switzerland	7 September 2000	
Turkey	8 September 2000	
Ukraine	7 September 2000	
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	7 September 2000	
United States of America	5 July 2000	
Uruguay	7 September 2000	
Venezuela	7 September 2000	
Viet Nam	8 September 2000	

Annex III

STATES WHICH HAVE SIGNED OR RATIFIED THE OPTIONAL PROTOCOL TO THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD ON THE SALE OF CHILDREN, CHILD PROSTITUTION AND CHILD PORNOGRAPHY AS AT 26 JANUARY 2001 (1)

(not yet entered into force)

States	Date of signature	Date of receipt of instrument of ratification/accession[a]
Andorra	7 September 2000	
Austria	6 September 2000	
Azerbaijan	8 September 2000	
Bangladesh	6 September 2000	6 September 2000
Belgium	6 September 2000	
Belize	6 September 2000	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	7 September 2000	
Brazil	6 September 2000	
Cambodia	27 June 2000	
Chile	28 June 2000	
China	6 September 2000	
Colombia	6 September 2000	
Costa Rica	7 September 2000	
Cuba	13 October 2000	
Denmark	7 September 2000	
Ecuador	6 September 2000	
Finland	7 September 2000	
France	6 September 2000	
Gabon	8 September 2000	
Gambia	21 December 2000	
Germany	6 September 2000	
Greece	7 September 2000	
Guatemala	7 September 2000	
Guinea-Bissau	8 September 2000	
Holy See	10 October 2000	

States	Date of signature	Date of receipt of instrument of ratification/accession[a]
Iceland	7 September 2000	
Ireland	7 September 2000	
Italy	6 September 2000	
Jamaica	8 September 2000	
Jordan	6 September 2000	
Kazakhstan	6 September 2000	
Kenya	8 September 2000	
Lesotho	6 September 2000	
Liechtenstein	8 September 2000	
Luxembourg	8 September 2000	
Madagascar	7 September 2000	
Malawi	7 September 2000	
Malta	7 September 2000	
Mexico	7 September 2000	
Monaco	26 June 2000	
Morocco	8 September 2000	
Namibia	8 September 2000	
Nauru	8 September 2000	
Nepal	8 September 2000	
Netherlands	7 September 2000	
New Zealand	7 September 2000	
Nigeria	8 September 2000	
Norway	13 June 2000	
Panama	31 October 2000	
Paraguay	13 September 2000	
Peru	1 November 2000	
Philippines	8 September 2000	
Portugal	6 September 2000	
Republic of Korea	6 September 2000	
Romania	6 September 2000	
San Marino	5 June 2000	
Senegal	8 September 2000	
Seychelles	23 January 2001	
Sierra Leone	8 September 2000	
Slovenia	8 September 2000	

States	Date of signature	Date of receipt of instrument of ratification/accession[a]
Spain	6 September 2000	
Sweden	8 September 2000	
Switzerland	7 September 2000	
Turkey	8 September 2000	
Ukraine	7 September 2000	
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	7 September 2000	
United States of America	5 July 2000	
Uruguay	7 September 2000	
Venezuela	7 September 2000	
Viet Nam	8 September 2000	

Annex IV

MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Name of member	Country of nationality
Mr. Jacob Egbert DOEK**	Netherlands
Mrs. Amina Hamza EL GUINDI**	Egypt
Mr. Francesco Paolo FULCI*	Italy
Mrs. Judith KARP**	Israel
Mrs. Lily I. RILANTONO*	Indonesia
Mrs. Esther Margaret Queen MOKHUANE*	South Africa
Mrs. Awa N'Deye OUEDRAOGO**	Burkina Faso
Mr. Ghassan Salim RABAH*	Lebanon
Mrs. Marilia SARDENBERG*	Brazil
Mrs. Elisabeth TIGERSTEDT-TÄHTELÄ**	Finland

* Term expires on 28 February 2001.

** Term expires on 28 February 2003.

Annex V

STATUS OF SUBMISSION OF REPORTS BY STATES PARTIES UNDER ARTICLE 44 OF THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD AS AT 26 JANUARY 2001

Initial reports due in 1992

State party	Date of entry into force	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
Bangladesh	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	15 November 1995	CRC/C/3/Add.38 and Add.49
Barbados	8 November 1990	7 November 1992	12 September 1996	CRC/C/3/Add.45
Belarus	31 October 1990	30 October 1992	12 February 1993	CRC/C/3/Add.14
Belize	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	1 November 1996	CRC/C/3/Add.46
Benin	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	22 January 1997	CRC/C/3/Add.52
Bhutan	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	20 April 1999	CRC/C/3/Add.59
Bolivia	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	14 September 1992	CRC/C/3/Add.2
Brazil	24 October 1990	23 October 1992		
Burkina Faso	30 September 1990	29 September 1992	7 July 1993	CRC/C/3/Add.19
Burundi	18 November 1990	17 November 1992	19 March 1998	CRC/C/3/Add.58
Chad	1 November 1990	31 October 1992	14 January 1997	CRC/C/3/Add.50
Chile	12 September 1990	11 September 1992	22 June 1993	CRC/C/3/Add.18
Costa Rica	20 September 1990	20 September 1992	28 October 1992	CRC/C/3/Add.8
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	21 October 1990	20 October 1992	13 February 1996	CRC/C/3/Add.41
Democratic Republic of the Congo	27 October 1990	26 October 1992	16 February 1998	CRC/C/3/Add.57
Ecuador	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	11 June 1996	CRC/C/3/Add.44
Egypt	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	23 October 1992	CRC/C/3/Add.6
El Salvador	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	3 November 1992	CRC/C/3/Add.9 and Add.28
France	6 September 1990	5 September 1992	8 April 1993	CRC/C/3/Add.15
Gambia	7 September 1990	6 September 1992	20 November 1999	CRC/C/3/Add.61

Initial reports due in 1992 (continued)

State party	Date of entry into force	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
Ghana	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	20 November 1995	CRC/C/3/Add.39
Grenada	5 December 1990	4 December 1992	24 September 1997	CRC/C/3/Add.55
Guatemala	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	5 January 1995	CRC/C/3/Add.33
Guinea	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	20 November 1996	CRC/C/3/Add.48
Guinea-Bissau	19 September 1990	18 September 1992	6 September 2000	CRC/C/3/Add.63
Holy See	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	2 March 1994	CRC/C/3/Add.27
Honduras	9 September 1990	8 September 1992	11 May 1993	CRC/C/3/Add.17
Indonesia	5 October 1990	4 October 1992	17 November 1992	CRC/C/3/Add.10 and Add.26
Kenya	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	13 January 2000	CRC/C/3/Add.62
Mali	20 October 1990	19 October 1992	2 April 1997	CRC/C/3/Add.53
Malta	30 October 1990	29 October 1992	26 December 1997	CRC/C/3/Add.56
Mauritius	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	25 July 1995	CRC/C/3/Add.36
Mexico	21 October 1990	20 October 1992	15 December 1992	CRC/C/3/Add.11
Mongolia	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	20 October 1994	CRC/C/3/Add.32
Namibia	30 October 1990	29 October 1992	21 December 1992	CRC/C/3/Add.12
Nepal	14 October 1990	13 October 1992	10 April 1995	CRC/C/3/Add.34
Nicaragua	4 November 1990	3 November 1992	12 January 1994	CRC/C/3/Add.25
Niger	30 October 1990	29 October 1992	28 December 2000	CRC/C/3/Add.29/Rev.1
Pakistan	12 December 1990	11 December 1992	25 January 1993	CRC/C/3/Add.13
Paraguay	25 October 1990	24 October 1992	30 August 1993 and 13 November 1996	CRC/C/3/Add.22 and Add.47
Peru	4 October 1990	3 October 1992	28 October 1992	CRC/C/3/Add.7 and Add.24
Philippines	20 September 1990	19 September 1992	21 September 1993	CRC/C/3/Add.23
Portugal	21 October 1990	20 October 1992	17 August 1994	CRC/C/3/Add.30
Romania	28 October 1990	27 October 1992	14 April 1993	CRC/C/3/Add.16
Russian Federation	15 September 1990	14 September 1992	16 October 1992	CRC/C/3/Add.5

Initial reports due in 1992 (continued)

State party	Date of entry into force	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
Saint Kitts and Nevis	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	21 January 1997	CRC/C/3/Add.51
Senegal	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	12 September 1994	CRC/C/3/Add.31
Seychelles	7 October 1990	6 October 1992		
Sierra Leone	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	10 April 1996	CRC/C/3/Add.43
Sudan	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	29 September 1992	CRC/C/3/Add.3 and Add.20
Sweden	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	7 September 1992	CRC/C/3/Add.1
Togo	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	27 February 1996	CRC/C/3/Add.42
Uganda	16 September 1990	15 September 1992	1 February 1996	CRC/C/3/Add.40
Uruguay	20 December 1990	19 December 1992	2 August 1995	CRC/C/3/Add.37
Venezuela	13 October 1990	12 October 1992	9 July 1997	CRC/C/3/Add.54
Viet Nam	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	30 September 1992	CRC/C/3/Add.4 and Add.21
Zimbabwe	11 October 1990	10 October 1992	23 May 1995	CRC/C/3/Add.35

Initial reports due in 1993

Angola	4 January 1991	3 January 1993		
Argentina	3 January 1991	2 January 1993	17 March 1993	CRC/C/8/Add.2 and Add.17
Australia	16 January 1991	15 January 1993	8 January 1996	CRC/C/8/Add.31
Bahamas	22 March 1991	21 March 1993		
Bulgaria	3 July 1991	2 July 1993	29 September 1995	CRC/C/8/Add.29
Colombia	7 February 1991	26 February 1993	14 April 1993	CRC/C/8/Add.3
Côte d'Ivoire	6 March 1991	5 March 1993	22 January 1998	CRC/C/8/Add.41
Croatia	7 November 1991	6 November 1993	8 November 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.19
Cuba	20 September 1991	19 September 1993	27 October 1995	CRC/C/8/Add.30
Cyprus	9 March 1991	8 March 1993	22 December 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.24

Initial reports due in 1993 (continued)

State party	Date of entry into force	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
Denmark	18 August 1991	17 August 1993	14 September 1993	CRC/C/8/Add.8
Djibouti	5 January 1991	4 January 1993	17 February 1998	CRC/C/8/Add.39
Dominica	12 April 1991	11 April 1993		
Dominican Republic	11 July 1991	10 July 1993	1 December 1999	CRC/C/8/Add.40
Estonia	20 November 1991	19 November 1993		
Ethiopia	13 June 1991	12 June 1993	10 August 1995	CRC/C/8/Add.27
Finland	20 July 1991	19 July 1993	12 December 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.22
Guyana	13 February 1991	12 February 1993		
Hungary	6 November 1991	5 November 1993	28 June 1996	CRC/C/8/Add.34
Israel	2 November 1991	1 November 1993		
Italy	5 October 1991	4 October 1993	11 October 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.18
Jamaica	13 June 1991	12 June 1993	25 January 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.12
Jordan	23 June 1991	22 June 1993	25 May 1993	CRC/C/8/Add.4
Kuwait	20 November 1991	19 November 1993	23 August 1996	CRC/C/8/Add.35
Lao People's Democratic Republic	7 June 1991	6 June 1993	18 January 1996	CRC/C/8/Add.32
Lebanon	13 June 1991	12 June 1993	21 December 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.23
Madagascar	18 April 1991	17 May 1993	20 July 1993	CRC/C/8/Add.5
Malawi	1 February 1991	31 January 1993	1 August 2000	CRC/C/8/Add.43
Maldives	13 March 1991	12 March 1993	6 July 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.33 and Add.37
Mauritania	15 June 1991	14 June 1993	18 January 2000	CRC/C/8/Add.42
Myanmar	14 August 1991	13 August 1993	14 September 1995	CRC/C/8/Add.9
Nigeria	19 May 1991	18 May 1993	19 July 1995	CRC/C/8/Add.26
Norway	7 February 1991	6 February 1993	30 August 1993	CRC/C/8/Add.7
Panama	11 January 1991	10 January 1993	19 September 1995	CRC/C/8/Add.28
Poland	7 July 1991	6 July 1993	11 January 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.11
Republic of Korea	20 December 1991	19 December 1993	17 November 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.21
Rwanda	23 February 1991	22 February 1993	30 September 1992	CRC/C/8/Add.1
San Marino	25 December 1991	24 December 1993		
Sao Tome and Principe	13 June 1991	12 June 1993		
Slovenia	25 June 1991	24 June 1993	29 May 1995	CRC/C/8/Add.25

Initial reports due in 1993 (continued)

State party	Date of entry into force	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
Spain	5 January 1991	4 January 1993	10 August 1993	CRC/C/8/Add.6
Sri Lanka	11 August 1991	10 August 1993	23 March 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.13
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	17 September 1991	16 September 1993	4 March 1997	CRC/C/8/Add.36
Ukraine	27 September 1991	26 September 1993	8 October 1993	CRC/C/8/Add.10/Rev.1
United Republic of Tanzania	10 July 1991	9 July 1993	20 October 1999	CRC/C/8/Add.14/Rev.1
Yemen	31 May 1991	30 May 1993	14 November 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.20 and Add.38
Yugoslavia	2 February 1991	1 February 1993	21 September 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.16

Initial reports due in 1994

Albania	28 March 1992	27 March 1994		
Austria	5 September 1992	4 September 1994	8 October 1996	CRC/C/11/Add.14
Azerbaijan	12 September 1992	11 September 1994	9 November 1995	CRC/C/11/Add.8
Bahrain	14 March 1992	14 March 1994	3 August 2000	CRC/C/11/Add.24
Belgium	15 January 1992	14 January 1994	12 July 1994	CRC/C/11/Add.4
Bosnia and Herzegovina	6 March 1992	5 March 1994		
Cambodia	14 November 1992	15 November 1994	18 December 1997	CRC/C/11/Add.16
Canada	12 January 1992	11 January 1994	17 June 1994	CRC/C/11/Add.3
Cape Verde	4 July 1992	3 July 1994	30 November 1999	CRC/C/11/Add.23
Central African Republic	23 May 1992	23 May 1994	15 April 1998	CRC/C/11/Add.18

Initial reports due in 1994 (continued)

State party	Date of entry into force	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
China	1 April 1992	31 March 1994	27 March 1995	CRC/C/11/Add.7
Czech Republic	1 January 1993	31 December 1994	4 March 1996	CRC/C/11/Add.11
Equatorial Guinea	15 July 1992	14 July 1994		
Germany	5 April 1992	4 May 1994	30 August 1994	CRC/C/11/Add.5
Iceland	27 November 1992	26 November 1994	30 November 1994	CRC/C/11/Add.6
Ireland	28 October 1992	27 October 1994	4 April 1996	CRC/C/11/Add.12
Latvia	14 May 1992	13 May 1994	25 November 1998	CRC/C/11/Add.22
Lesotho	9 April 1992	8 April 1994	27 April 1998	CRC/C/11/Add.20
Lithuania	1 March 1992	28 February 1994	6 August 1998	CRC/C/11/Add.21
Slovakia	1 January 1993	31 December 1994	6 April 1998	CRC/C/11/Add.17
Thailand	26 April 1992	25 April 1994	23 August 1996	CRC/C/11/Add.13
Trinidad and Tobago	4 January 1992	3 January 1994	16 February 1996	CRC/C/11/Add.10
Tunisia	29 February 1992	28 February 1994	16 May 1994	CRC/C/11/Add.2
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	15 January 1992	14 January 1994	15 March 1994	CRC/C/11/Add.1, Add.9, Add.15 and Add.15/Corr.1, Add.19
Zambia	5 January 1992	4 January 1994		

Initial reports due in 1995

Algeria	16 May 1993	15 May 1995	16 November 1995	CRC/C/28/Add.4
Antigua and Barbuda	4 November 1993	3 November 1995		
Armenia	23 July 1993	5 August 1995	19 February 1997	CRC/C/28/Add.9
Cameroon	10 February 1993	9 February 1995	3 April 2000	CRC/C/28/Add.16
Comoros	22 July 1993	21 July 1995	24 March 1998	CRC/C/28/Add.13

Initial reports due in 1995 (continued)

State party	Date of entry into force	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
Congo	13 November 1993	12 November 1995		
Fiji	12 September 1993	11 September 1995	12 June 1996	CRC/C/28/Add.7
Greece	10 June 1993	9 June 1995	14 April 2000	CRC/C/28/Add.17
India	11 January 1993	10 January 1995	19 March 1997	CRC/C/28/Add.10
Liberia	4 July 1993	3 July 1995		
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	15 May 1993	14 May 1995	23 May 1996	CRC/C/28/Add.6
Marshall Islands	3 November 1993	2 November 1995	18 March 1998	CRC/C/28/Add.12
Micronesia (Federated States of)	4 June 1993	3 June 1995	16 April 1996	CRC/C/28/Add.5
Monaco	21 July 1993	20 July 1995	9 June 1999	CRC/C/28/Add.15
Morocco	21 July 1993	20 July 1995	27 July 1995	CRC/C/28/Add.1
New Zealand	6 May 1993	5 May 1995	29 September 1995	CRC/C/28/Add.3
Papua New Guinea	31 March 1993	31 March 1995		
Republic of Moldova	25 February 1993	24 February 1995		
Saint Lucia	16 July 1993	15 July 1995		
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	25 November 1993	24 November 1995	5 December 2001	CRC/C/28/Add.18
Suriname	31 March 1993	31 March 1995	13 February 1998	CRC/C/28/Add.11
Syrian Arab Republic	14 August 1993	13 August 1995	22 September 1995	CRC/C/28/Add.2
Tajikistan	25 November 1993	24 November 1995	14 April 1998	CRC/C/28/Add.14
Turkmenistan	20 October 1993	19 October 1995		
Vanuatu	6 August 1993	5 August 1995	27 January 1997	CRC/C/28/Add.8

Initial reports due in 1996

State party	Date of entry into force	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
Afghanistan	27 April 1994	26 April 1996		
Gabon	11 March 1994	10 March 1996	21 June 2000	CRC/C/41/Add.10
Luxembourg	6 April 1994	5 April 1996	26 July 1996	CRC/C/41/Add.2
Japan	22 May 1994	21 May 1996	30 May 1996	CRC/C/41/Add.1
Mozambique	26 May 1994	25 May 1996	21 June 2000	CRC/C/41/Add.11
Georgia	2 July 1994	1 July 1996	7 April 1997	CRC/C/41/Add.4
Iraq	15 July 1994	14 July 1996	6 August 1996	CRC/C/41/Add.3
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland				
(Overseas	7 September 1994	6 September 1996	26 May 1999	CRC/C/41/Add.7
Territories)	29 July 1994	28 July 1996	27 December 1999	CRC/C/41/Add.8
Uzbekistan				
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	12 August 1994	11 August 1996	9 December 1997	CRC/C/41/Add.5
Nauru	26 August 1994	25 August 1996		
Eritrea	2 September 1994	1 September 1996		
Kazakhstan	11 September 1994	10 September 1996		
Kyrgyzstan	6 November 1994	5 November 1996	16 February 1998	CRC/C/41/Add.6
Samoa	29 December 1994	28 December 1996		

Initial reports due in 1997

Netherlands	7 March 1995	6 March 1997	15 May 1997	CRC/C/51/Add.1
Malaysia	19 March 1995	18 March 1997		
Botswana	13 April 1995	12 April 1997		
Qatar	3 May 1995	2 May 1997	29 October 1999	CRC/C/51/Add.5
Turkey	4 May 1995	3 May 1997		

Initial reports due in 1997 (continued)

State party	Date of entry into force	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
Solomon Islands	10 May 1995	9 May 1997		
Haiti	8 July 1995	7 July 1997		
South Africa	16 July 1995	15 July 1997	4 December 1997	CRC/C/51/Add.2
Palau	3 September 1995	3 September 1997	21 October 1998	CRC/C/51/Add.3
Swaziland	6 October 1995	5 October 1997		
Tuvalu	22 October 1995	21 October 1997		
Singapore	4 November 1995	3 November 1997		
Tonga	6 December 1995	5 December 1997		

Initial reports due in 1998

Kiribati	10 January 1996	9 January 1998		
Niue	19 January 1996	18 January 1998		
Liechtenstein	21 January 1996	20 January 1998	22 September 1998	CRC/C/61/Add.1
Brunei Darussalam	26 January 1996	25 January 1998		
Andorra	1 February 1996	31 January 1998	27 July 2000	CRC/C/61/Add.3
Saudi Arabia	25 February 1996	24 February 1998	21 October 1999	CRC/C/61/Add.2

Initial reports due in 1999

Oman	8 January 1997	7 January 1999	5 July 1999	CRC/C/78/Add.1
United Arab Emirates	2 February 1997	1 February 1999	15 April 2000	CRC/C/78/Add.2
Switzerland	26 March 1997	25 March 1999	19 January 2001	CRC/C/78/Add.3
Cook Islands	6 July 1997	5 July 1999		

Initial reports due in 2000

State party	Date of entry into force	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
Netherlands (Netherlands Antilles)	17 February 1998	16 February 2000	22 January 2001	CRC/C/107/Add.1

Second periodic reports due in 1997

State party	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
Bangladesh	1 September 1997		
Barbados	7 November 1997		
Belarus	30 October 1997	20 May 1999	CRC/C/65/Add.14
Belize	1 September 1997		
Benin	1 September 1997		
Bhutan	1 September 1997		
Bolivia	1 September 1997	12 August 1997	CRC/C/65/Add.1
Brazil	23 October 1997		
Burkina Faso	29 September 1997	11 October 1999	CRC/C/65/Add.18
Burundi	17 November 1997		
Chad	31 October 1997		
Chile	11 September 1997	10 February 1999	CRC/C/65/Add.13
Costa Rica	20 September 1997	20 January 1998	CRC/C/65/Add.7
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	20 October 1997		
Democratic Republic of the Congo	26 October 1997		
Ecuador	1 September 1997		
Egypt	1 September 1997	18 September 1998	CRC/C/65/Add.9
El Salvador	1 September 1997		
France	5 September 1997		
Gambia	6 September 1997		

Second periodic reports due in 1997 (continued)

State party	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
Ghana	1 September 1997		
Grenada	4 December 1997		
Guatemala	1 September 1997	7 October 1998	CRC/C/65/Add.10
Guinea	1 September 1997		
Guinea-Bissau	18 September 1997		
Holy See	1 September 1997		
Honduras	8 September 1997	18 September 1997	CRC/C/65/Add.2
Indonesia	4 October 1997		
Kenya	1 September 1997		
Mali	19 October 1997		
Malta	29 October 1997		
Mauritius	1 September 1997		
Mexico	20 October 1997	14 January 1998	CRC/C/65/Add.6
Mongolia	1 September 1997		
Namibia	29 October 1997		
Nepal	13 October 1997		
Nicaragua	3 November 1997	12 November 1997	CRC/C/65/Add.4
Niger	29 October 1997		
Pakistan	11 December 1997	19 January 2001	CRC/C/65/Add.20
Paraguay	24 October 1997	12 October 1998	CRC/C/65/Add.12
Peru	3 October 1997	25 March 1998	CRC/C/65/Add.8
Philippines	19 September 1997		
Portugal	20 October 1997	8 October 1998	CRC/C/65/Add.11
Romania	27 October 1997	18 January 2000	CRC/C/65/Add.19
Russian Federation	14 September 1997	12 January 1998	CRC/C/65/Add.5

Second periodic reports due in 1997 (continued)

State party	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
Saint Kitts and Nevis	1 September 1997		
Senegal	1 September 1997		
Seychelles	6 October 1997		
Sierra Leone	1 September 1997		
Sudan	1 September 1997	7 July 1999	CRC/C/65/Add.15
Sweden	1 September 1997	25 September 1997	CRC/C/65/Add.3
Togo	1 September 1997		
Uganda	15 September 1997		
Uruguay	19 December 1997		
Venezuela	12 October 1997		
Viet Nam	1 September 1997	10 May 2000	CRC/C/65/Add.20
Zimbabwe	10 October 1997		

Second periodic reports due in 1998

Angola	3 January 1998		
Argentina	2 January 1998	12 August 1999	CRC/C/70/Add.16
Australia	15 January 1998		
Bahamas	21 March 1998		
Bulgaria	2 July 1998		
Colombia	26 February 1998	9 September 1998	CRC/C/70/Add.5
Côte d'Ivoire	5 March 1998		
Croatia	7 October 1998		
Cuba	19 September 1998		
Cyprus	8 March 1998	15 September 2000	CRC/C/70/Add.16
Denmark	17 August 1998	15 September 1998	CRC/C/70/Add.6
Djibouti	4 January 1998		
Dominica	11 April 1998		
Dominican Republic	10 July 1998		
Estonia	19 November 1998		

Second periodic reports due in 1998 (continued)

State party	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
Ethiopia	12 June 1998	28 September 1998	CRC/C/70/Add.7
Finland	19 July 1998	3 August 1998	CRC/C/70/Add.3
Guyana	12 February 1998		
Hungary	5 November 1998		
Israel	1 November 1998		
Italy	4 October 1998	21 March 2000	CRC/C/70/Add.13
Jamaica	12 June 1998	16 May 2000	CRC/C/70/Add.15
Jordan	22 June 1998	5 August 1998	CRC/C/70/Add.4
Kuwait	19 November 1998		
Lao People's Democratic Republic	6 June 1998		
Lebanon	12 June 1998	4 December 1998	CRC/C/70/Add.8
Madagascar	17 April 1998		
Malawi	31 January 1998		
Maldives	12 March 1998		
Mauritania	14 June 1998		
Myanmar	13 August 1998		
Nigeria	18 May 1998		
Norway	6 February 1998	1 July 1998	CRC/C/70/Add.2
Panama	10 January 1998		
Poland	6 July 1998	2 December 1999	CRC/C/70/Add.12
Republic of Korea	19 December 1998	1 May 2000	CRC/C/70/Add.14
Rwanda	22 February 1998		
San Marino	24 December 1998		
Sao Tome and Principe	12 June 1998		
Slovenia	24 June 1998		

Second periodic reports due in 1998 (continued)

State party	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
Spain	4 January 1998	1 June 1999	CRC/C/70/Add.9
Sri Lanka	10 August 1998	21 September 2000	CRC/C/70/Add.17
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	16 September 1998		
Ukraine	26 September 1998	12 August 1999	CRC/C/70/Add.11
United Republic of Tanzania	9 July 1998		
Yemen	30 May 1998	3 February 1998	CRC/C/70/Add.1
Yugoslavia	1 February 1998		

Second periodic reports due in 1999

Albania	27 March 1999		
Austria	4 September 1999		
Azerbaijan	11 September 1999		
Bahrain	14 March 1999		
Belgium	15 January 1999	7 May 1999	CRC/C/83/Add.2
Bosnia and Herzegovina	5 March 1999		
Cambodia	15 November 1999		
Canada	11 January 1999		
Cape Verde	3 July 1999		
Central African Republic	23 May 1999		
China	31 March 1999		
Czech Republic	31 December 1999	3 March 2000	CRC/C/83/Add.4
Equatorial Guinea	14 July 1999		
Germany	4 May 1999		
Iceland	26 November 1999	27 April 2000	CRC/C/83/Add.5
Ireland	27 October 1999		
Latvia	13 May 1999		
Lesotho	8 April 1999		
Lithuania	28 February 1999		
Slovakia	31 December 1999		

Second periodic reports due in 1999 (continued)

State party	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
Thailand	25 April 1999		
Trinidad and Tobago	3 January 1999		
Tunisia	28 February 1999	16 March 1999	CRC/C/83/Add.1
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	14 January 1999	14 September 1999	CRC/C/83/Add.3
Zambia	4 January 1999		

Second periodic reports due in 2000

Algeria	15 May 2000		
Antigua and Barbuda	3 November 2000		
Armenia	5 August 2000		
Cameroon	9 February 2000		
Comoros	21 July 2000		
Congo	12 November 2000		
Federated States of Micronesia	3 June 2000		
Fiji	11 September 2000		
Greece	9 June 2000		
Liberia	3 July 2000		
India	10 January 2000		
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	14 May 2000	8 August 2000	CRC/C/93/Add.1
Marshall Islands	2 November 2000		
Monaco	20 July 2000		
Morocco	20 July 2000	13 October 2000	CRC/C/93/Add.3

Second periodic reports due in 2000 (continued)

State party	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
New Zealand	5 May 2000		
Papua New Guinea	31 March 2000		
Republic of Moldova	24 February 2000		
Saint Lucia	15 July 2000		
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	24 November 2000		
Suriname	31 March 2000		
Syrian Arab Republic	13 August 2000	15 August 2000	CRC/C/93/Add.2
Tajikistan	24 November 2000		
Turkmenistan	19 October 2000		
Vanuatu	5 August 2000		

Second periodic reports due in 2001

Gabon	10 March 2001
Luxembourg	5 April 2001
Afghanistan	26 April 2001
Japan	21 May 2001
Mozambique	25 May 2001
Georgia	1 July 2001
Iraq	14 July 2001
Uzbekistan	28 July 2001
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	11 August 2001
Nauru	25 August 2001
Eritrea	1 September 2001
Kazakhstan	10 September 2001
Kyrgyzstan	5 November 2001
Samoa	28 December 2001

Annex VI

LIST OF INITIAL AND SECOND PERIODIC REPORTS CONSIDERED BY THE COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD AS AT 26 JANUARY 2001

	State party reports	Observations adopted by the Committee
Third session (January 1993)		
Bolivia	CRC/C/3/Add.2	CRC/C/15/Add.1
Sweden	CRC/C/3/Add.1	CRC/C/15/Add.2
Viet Nam	CRC/C/3/Add.4 and 21	CRC/C/15/Add.3
Russian Federation	CRC/C/3/Add.5	CRC/C/15/Add.4
Egypt	CRC/C/3/Add.6	CRC/C/15/Add.5
Sudan	CRC/C/3/Add.3	CRC/C/15/Add.6 (preliminary)
Fourth session (September-October 1993)		
Indonesia	CRC/C/3/Add.10	CRC/C/15/Add.7 (preliminary)
Peru	CRC/C/3/Add.7	CRC/C/15/Add.8
El Salvador	CRC/C/3/Add.9 and 28	CRC/C/15/Add.9
Sudan	CRC/C/3/Add.3 and 20	CRC/C/15/Add.10
Costa Rica	CRC/C/3/Add.8	CRC/C/15/Add.11
Rwanda	CRC/C/8/Add.1	CRC/C/15/Add.12 (preliminary)
Fifth session (January 1994)		
Mexico	CRC/C/3/Add.11	CRC/C/15/Add.13
Namibia	CRC/C/3/Add.12	CRC/C/15/Add.14
Colombia	CRC/C/8/Add.3	CRC/C/15/Add.15 (preliminary)
Romania	CRC/C/3/Add.16	CRC/C/15/Add.16
Belarus	CRC/C/3/Add.14	CRC/C/15/Add.17
Sixth session (April 1994)		
Pakistan	CRC/C/3/Add.13	CRC/C/15/Add.18
Burkina Faso	CRC/C/3/Add.19	CRC/C/15/Add.19
France	CRC/C/3/Add.15	CRC/C/15/Add.20
Jordan	CRC/C/8/Add.4	CRC/C/15/Add.21
Chile	CRC/C/3/Add.18	CRC/C/15/Add.22
Norway	CRC/C/8/Add.7	CRC/C/15/Add.23

	State party reports	Observations adopted by the Committee
Seventh session (September-October 1994)		
Honduras	CRC/C/3/Add.17	CRC/C/15/Add.24
Indonesia	CRC/C/3/Add.10 and 26	CRC/C/15/Add.25
Madagascar	CRC/C/8/Add.5	CRC/C/15/Add.26
Paraguay	CRC/C/3/Add.22	CRC/C/15/Add.27 (preliminary)
Spain	CRC/C/8/Add.6	CRC/C/15/Add.28
Argentina	CRC/C/8/Add.2 and 17	CRC/C/15/Add.35 (adopted at the eighth session)
Eighth session (January 1995)		
Philippines	CRC/C/3/Add.23	CRC/C/15/Add.29
Colombia	CRC/C/8/Add.3	CRC/C/15/Add.30
Poland	CRC/C/8/Add.11	CRC/C/15/Add.31
Jamaica	CRC/C/8/Add.12	CRC/C/15/Add.32
Denmark	CRC/C/8/Add.8	CRC/C/15/Add.33
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	CRC/C/11/Add.1	CRC/C/15/Add.34
Ninth session (May-June 1995)		
Nicaragua	CRC/C/3/Add.25	CRC/C/15/Add.36
Canada	CRC/C/11/Add.3	CRC/C/15/Add.37
Belgium	CRC/C 11/Add.4	CRC/C/15/Add.38
Tunisia	CRC/C 11/Add.2	CRC/C/15/Add.39
Sri Lanka	CRC/C/8/Add.13	CRC/C/15/Add.40
Tenth session (October-November 1995)		
Italy	CRC/C/8/Add.18	CRC/C/15/Add.41
Ukraine	CRC/C/8/Add.10/Rev.1	CRC/C/15/Add.42
Germany	CRC/C/11/Add.5	CRC/C/15/Add.43
Senegal	CRC/C/3/Add.31	CRC/C/15/Add.44
Portugal	CRC/C/3/Add.30	CRC/C/15/Add.45
Holy See	CRC/C/3/Add.27	CRC/C/15/Add.46

	State party reports	Observations adopted by the Committee
Eleventh session (January 1996)		
Yemen	CRC/C/8/Add.20	CRC/C/15/Add.47
Mongolia	CRC/C/3/Add.32	CRC/C/15/Add.48
Yugoslavia	CRC/C/8/Add.26	CRC/C/15/Add.49
Iceland	CRC/C/11/Add.6	CRC/C/15/Add.50
Republic of Korea	CRC/C/8/Add.21	CRC/C/15/Add.51
Croatia	CRC/C/8/Add.19	CRC/C/15/Add.52
Finland	CRC/C/8/Add.22	CRC/C/15/Add.53
Twelfth session (May-June 1996)		
Lebanon	CRC/C/18/Add.23	CRC/C/15/Add.54
Zimbabwe	CRC/C/3/Add.35	CRC/C/15/Add.55
China	CRC/C/11/Add.7	CRC/C/15/Add.56
Nepal	CRC/C/3/Add.34	CRC/C/15/Add.57
Guatemala	CRC/C/3/Add.33	CRC/C/15/Add.58
Cyprus	CRC/C/8/Add.24	CRC/C/15/Add.59
Thirteenth session (September-October 1996)		
Morocco	CRC/C/28/Add.1	CRC/C/15/Add.60
Nigeria	CRC/C/8/Add.26	CRC/C/15/Add.61
Uruguay	CRC/C/3/Add.37	CRC/C/15/Add.62
United Kingdom (Hong Kong)	CRC/C/11/Add.9	CRC/C/15/Add.63
Mauritius	CRC/C/3/Add.36	CRC/C/15/Add.64
Slovenia	CRC/C/8/Add.25	CRC/C/15/Add.65
Fourteenth session (January 1997)		
Ethiopia	CRC/C/8/Add.27	CRC/C/15/Add.66
Myanmar	CRC/C/8/Add.9	CRC/C/15/Add.67
Panama	CRC/C/8/Add.28	CRC/C/15/Add.68
Syrian Arab Republic	CRC/C/28/Add.2	CRC/C/15/Add.69
New Zealand	CRC/C/28/Add.3	CRC/C/15/Add.70
Bulgaria	CRC/C/8/Add.29	CRC/C/15/Add.71
Fifteenth session (May-June 1997)		
Cuba	CRC/C/8/Add.30	CRC/C/15/Add.72
Ghana	CRC/C/3/Add.39	CRC/C/15/Add.73
Bangladesh	CRC/C/3/Add.38 and 49	CRC/C/15/Add.74
Paraguay	CRC/C/3/Add.22 and 47	CRC/C/15/Add.75
Algeria	CRC/C/28/Add.4	CRC/C/15/Add.76
Azerbaijan	CRC/C/11/Add.8	CRC/C/15/Add.77

	State party reports	Observations adopted by the Committee
Sixteenth session (September-October 1997)		
Lao People's Democratic Republic	CRC/C/8/Add.32	CRC/C/15/Add.78
Australia	CRC/C/8/Add.31	CRC/C/15/Add.79
Uganda	CRC/C/3/Add.40	CRC/C/15/Add.80
Czech Republic	CRC/C/11/Add.11	CRC/C/15/Add.81
Trinidad and Tobago	CRC/C/11/Add.10	CRC/C/15/Add.82
Togo	CRC/C/3/Add.42	CRC/C/15/Add.83
Seventeenth session (January 1998)		
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	CRC/C/28/Add.6	CRC/C/15/Add.84
Ireland	CRC/C/11/Add.12	CRC/C/15/Add.85
Micronesia (Federated States of)	CRC/C/28/Add.5	CRC/C/15/Add.86
Eighteenth session (May-June 1998)		
Hungary	CRC/C/8/Add.34	CRC/C/15/Add.87
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	CRC/C/3/Add.41	CRC/C/15/Add.88
Fiji	CRC/C/28/Add.7	CRC/C/15/Add.89
Japan	CRC/C/41/Add.1	CRC/C/15/Add.90
Maldives	CRC/C/8/Add.33 and 37	CRC/C/15/Add.91
Luxembourg	CRC/C/41/Add.2	CRC/C/15/Add.92
Nineteenth session (September-October 1998)		
	Initial reports	
Ecuador	CRC/C/3/Add.44	CRC/C/15/Add.93
Iraq	CRC/C/41/Add.3	CRC/C/15/Add.94
Thailand	CRC/C/11/Add.13	CRC/C/15/Add.96
Kuwait	CRC/C/8/Add.35	CRC/C/15/Add.97
	Second periodic reports	
Bolivia	CRC/C/65/Add.1	CRC/C/15/Add.95

	State party reports	Observations adopted by the Committee
Twentieth session (January 1999)		
	Initial reports	
Austria	CRC/C/11/Add.14	CRC/C/15/Add.98
Belize	CRC/C/3/Add.46	CRC/C/15/Add.99
Guinea	CRC/C/3/Add.48	CRC/C/15/Add.100
	Second periodic reports	
Sweden	CRC/C/65/Add.3	CRC/C/15/Add.101
Yemen	CRC/C/70/Add.1	CRC/C/15/Add.102
Twenty-first session (17 May-4 June 1999)		
	Initial reports	
Barbados	CRC/C/3/Add.45	CRC/C/15/Add.103
St. Kitts and Nevis	CRC/C/3/Add.51	CRC/C/15/Add.104
Benin	CRC/C/3/Add.52	CRC/C/15/Add.106
Chad	CRC/C/3/Add.50	CRC/C/15/Add.107
	Second periodic reports	
Honduras	CRC/C/65/Add.2	CRC/C/15/Add.105
Nicaragua	CRC/C/65/Add.4	CRC/C/15/Add.108
Twenty-second session (20 September-8 October 1999)		
	Initial reports	
Venezuela	CRC/C/3/Add.54 and 59	CRC/C/15/Add.109
Vanuatu	CRC/C/28/Add.8	CRC/C/15/Add.111
Mali	CRC/C/3/Add.53	CRC/C/15/Add.113
Netherlands	CRC/C/51/Add.1	CRC/C/15/Add.114
	Second periodic reports	
Russian Federation	CRC/C/65/Add.5	CRC/C/15/Add.110
Mexico	CRC/C/65/Add.6	CRC/C/15/Add.112

	State party reports	Observations adopted by the Committee
Twenty-third session (10-28 January 2000)		
	Initial reports	
India	CRC/C/28/Add.10	CRC/C/15/Add.115
Sierra Leone	CRC/C/3/Add.43	CRC/C/15/Add.116
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	CRC/C/8/Add.36	CRC/C/15/Add.118
South Africa	CRC/C/51/Add.2	CRC/C/15/Add.122
Armenia	CRC/C/28/Add.9	CRC/C/15/Add.119
Grenada	CRC/C/3/Add.55	CRC/C/15/Add.121
	Second periodic reports	
Peru	CRC/C/65/Add.8	CRC/C/15/Add.120
Costa Rica	CRC/C/65/Add.7	CRC/C/15/Add.117
Twenty-fourth session (15 May-2 June 2000)		
	Initial reports	
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	CRC/C/41/Add.5	CRC/C/15/Add.123
Georgia	CRC/C/41/Add.4/Rev.1	CRC/C/15/Add.124
Kyrgyzstan	CRC/C/41/Add.6	CRC/C/15/Add.127
Cambodia	CRC/C/11/Add.16	CRC/C/15/Add.128
Malta	CRC/C/3/Add.56	CRC/C/15/Add.129
Suriname	CRC/C/28/Add.11	CRC/C/15/Add.130
Djibouti	CRC/C/8/Add.39	CRC/C/15/Add.131
	Second periodic reports	
Jordan	CRC/C/70/Add.4	CRC/C/15/Add.125
Norway	CRC/C/70/Add.2	CRC/C/15/Add.126
Twenty-fifth session (18 September-6 October 2000)		
	Initial reports	
Burundi	CRC/C/3/Add.58	CRC/C/15/Add.133
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Isle of Man)	CRC/C/11/Add.19 and Corr.1	CRC/C/15/Add.134
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Overseas Territories)	CRC/C/41/Add.7 and 9	CRC/C/15/Add.135

	State party reports	Observations adopted by the Committee
	Initial reports (contd.)	
Tajikistan	CRC/C/28/Add.14	CRC/C/15/Add.136
Central African Republic	CRC/C/11/Add.18	CRC/C/15/Add.138
Marshall Islands	CRC/C/28/Add.12	CRC/C/15/Add.139
Slovakia	CRC/C/11/Add.17	CRC/C/15/Add.140
Comoros	CRC/C/28/Add.13	CRC/C/15/Add.141
	Second periodic reports	
Finland	CRC/C/70/Add.3	CRC/C/15/Add.132
Colombia	CRC/C/70/Add.5	CRC/C/15/Add.137

Twenty-sixth session
(8-26 January 2001)

	Initial reports	
Latvia	CRC/C/11/Add.22	CRC/C/15/Add.142
Liechtenstein	CRC/C/61/Add.1	CRC/C/15/Add.143
Lithuania	CRC/C/11/Add.21	CRC/C/15/Add.146
Lesotho	CRC/C/11/Add.20	CRC/C/15/Add.147
Saudi Arabia	CRC/C/61/Add.2	CRC/C/15/Add.148
Palau	CRC/C/51/Add.3	CRC/C/15/Add.149
Dominican Republic	CRC/C/8/Add.40 and 44	CRC/C/15/Add.150
	Second periodic reports	
Ethiopia	CRC/C/70/Add.7	CRC/C/15/Add.144
Egypt	CRC/C/65/Add.9	CRC/C/15/Add.145

Annex VII

PROVISIONAL LIST OF REPORTS SCHEDULED FOR CONSIDERATION AT THE COMMITTEE'S TWENTY-SEVENTH AND TWENTY-EIGHTH SESSIONS

Twenty-seventh session
21 May-8 June 2001

Initial reports

Democratic Republic of the Congo	CRC/C/3/Add.57
Côte d'Ivoire	CRC/C/8/Add.41
Bhutan	CRC/C/3/Add.60
Monaco	CRC/C/28/Add.15
Oman	CRC/C/78/Add.1
Turkey	CRC/C/51/Add.4
United Republic of Tanzania	CRC/C/8/Add.14/Rev.1

Second periodic reports

Guatemala	CRC/C/65/Add.10
Denmark	CRC/C/70/Add.6

Twenty-eighth session
24 September-12 October 2001

Initial reports

Qatar	CRC/C/51/Add.5
Gambia	CRC/C/3/Add.61
Cape Verde	CRC/C/11/Add.23
Uzbekistan	CRC/C/41/Add.8
Kenya	CRC/C/3/Add.62
Mauritania	CRC/C/8/Add.42
Cameroon	CRC/C/28/Add.16

Second periodic reports

Portugal	CRC/C/65/Add.11
Paraguay	CRC/C/65/Add.12

Annex VIII

DAY OF GENERAL DISCUSSION (29 SEPTEMBER 2001)

VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN WITHIN THE FAMILY AND AT SCHOOL

Introduction

In accordance with rule 75 of its provisional rules of procedure, the Committee on the Rights of the Child has decided to devote periodically one day of general discussion to a specific article of the Convention or to a child rights theme.

The Committee believes that there is a need to increase further the attention given to violations of the right of children to be protected from all forms of violence. At its twenty-third session, in January 2000, the Committee on the Rights of the Child decided to devote two annual days of general discussion (in September 2000 and September 2001) to the theme "Violence against children".

The purpose of the general discussions is to foster a deeper understanding of the contents and implications of the Convention as they relate to specific topics. The discussions are public. Government representatives, United Nations human rights mechanisms, as well as United Nations bodies and specialized agencies, non-governmental organizations, and individual experts are invited to take part.

Background

The Committee has already held several discussion days on issues of relevance to this topic, including:

In 1992 on children in armed conflict;

In 1993 on economic exploitation of children;

In 1994 on the role of the family in the promotion of the rights of the child;

In 1995 on the girl child;

In 1995 on the administration of juvenile justice.

The Committee decided to divide the additional discussion of this topic into two different sessions, in order to permit more in-depth analysis. This division does not imply any conceptual distinction and should not be seen as negating the many aspects shared by all forms of violence exerted against children, and in particular the fact that the root causes of such violence are often the same wherever it is exerted. In order to have time for more detailed consideration, the Committee decided to focus the discussion of "Violence against children" in 2000 on State violence suffered by children living in institutions managed, licensed or supervised by the State, and in the context of "law and public order" concerns. In 2001, the focus will be on the problems of violence suffered by children within the family and in schools.

Theme for the day of general discussion

The Committee will explore the different aspects of the violence suffered by children in schools and at home during its day of general discussion in September 2001. The Convention on the Rights of the Child establishes high standards for the protection of children against violence, in particular under articles 19 and 28, as well as articles 29, 34, 37, 40, etc. but taking also into account the general principles contained in articles 2, 3, and 12 and in particular in article 6. The discussion is expected to explore the impact that the violence suffered by children in schools and within the family has on their enjoyment of all other human rights, and in particular the right to development of the child, including physical, mental, spiritual, moral, psychological and social development in a manner compatible with human dignity.

The division of this issue into two sub-themes for in-depth working group discussion will unavoidably lead to a certain amount of overlap between the different working group sessions, while other relevant issues may receive less attention. While aware of the possibility, the Committee considers that discussion in working groups is necessary to allow more detailed discussion of specific topics.

Particular attention should be paid by the discussions under both sub-themes to the position and special vulnerability of children who have been marginalized or discriminated against on the basis of their ethnic origin of economic status who can be, for example, singled out in schools for bullying or degrading treatment by teachers or be more vulnerable to violence within the family that escapes detection by the normal monitoring systems (for example for families that are homeless or illegal migrants).

Attention should also be paid to the distinct problems sometimes posed by gender discrimination. For girls, the fear of violence or sexual abuse from teachers and other students can more often lead to withdrawal from school. Girls are also often at higher risk of sexual abuse and other forms of violence within the family (including, for example, "honour killings" or traditional harmful practices). On the other hand, boys can also face discrimination that exposes them to a distinct risk of violence, as they are more often the victims of inadequate protection from violence by other students. Boys are also sometimes discriminated against by legislation or social values that makes them subject to forms of school "discipline" banned for girls, or tolerates the application of more brutal forms of discipline within the family.

Sub-themes for working group discussions

1. Violence within the family

The Convention on the Rights of the Child enshrines the principle that it is parents and guardians who bear the primary duty and responsibility for the upbringing of children, with the necessary support of the State (arts. 5 and 18). Article 19 requires States to take all appropriate measures to protect children from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and maltreatment, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parents or legal guardians.

The discussion will explore the problem faced by States in respecting the best interests of the child and other rights enshrined in the Convention in seeking to protect children from abuse while respecting the right to family privacy and the rights and responsibilities of parents. Issues to be discussed will include: appropriate legislation; the need for timely and effective identification and reporting of cases of child abuse and the role in that regard of health and other professionals working for and with children; the importance of multidisciplinary approaches and resources for prevention and intervention; the involvement of civil society, including NGOs; and the crucial role of appropriate training for relevant professionals.

In addition, the discussion will examine the role played by cultural values and social attitudes which may foster, tolerate, or even justify violent forms of discipline or other violent acts against children within the family, and the important role that civil society, including NGOs, can play in this respect. The acceptance of corporal punishment as a disciplinary measure reflects a problematic attitude to the rights of children. The notion that some forms of violence against children are acceptable or could be tolerated creates or maintains a social climate in which it is more difficult to prevent and detect extreme forms of violence and abuse against children, including incest and infanticide. Attention should also be given to the impact of domestic violence, for example spousal abuse, on children. This form of violence can not only create a climate in which children can not only become victims of violence but also makes violence a "normal" part of growing up and may in that way contribute to the perpetuation of the cycle of family violence for future generations.

2. Violence in schools

The first aspect of violence against children that violates the rights of children in schools is that exerted by teachers upon students, in the name of school discipline. Such methods of "discipline" (including corporal punishment, but also other treatment that can be defined as "cruel, inhuman or degrading") are not consistent with the requirement of respect for the child's dignity and his or her rights under the Convention, as specifically required by article 28 (2). The discussion should address the identification of appropriate and inappropriate forms of discipline, and consider the problems encountered by many States in implementing article 28 (2). Recommendations should address the most useful strategies and measures that can be taken by States, NGOs, parents and children themselves to address the problem in States where:

National legislation bans all inappropriate forms of discipline in schools, but practical implementation of the legislation is not satisfactory;

National legislation bans only some of the inappropriate forms of discipline but bans it only in certain types of school;

National legislation does not conform with article 28 (2).

Discussions of violence against children in schools are also expected to cover the problem of bullying, or violence and harassment suffered by students at the hands of other students. The failure to prevent such forms of violence and to protect students from violence at

the hands of other students can deny children their right to education as set out by articles 28 and 29 of the Convention, as well as its general principles, in particular the right to development enshrined in article 6. Useful strategies and measures to be identified by the discussion will include in particular the importance of active participation by children in efforts to prevent and combat bullying.

The discussion is also expected to address the related problem of violence suffered by teachers at the hands of students. Problems of vandalism and aggression against teachers can limit the ability of schools to protect children against inappropriate forms of discipline or bullying, and contribute to creating a school environment which fails to provide the education that children are entitled to under articles 28 and 29 of the Convention. The discussion is expected to identify useful strategies and measures that can address the problem of school violence while avoiding extreme security measures that can also violate the rights of children.

Approach and objectives for the day of general discussion

The subject of "Violence against children within the family and at school" is of particular relevance to a number of other United Nations human rights mechanisms. One objective of the discussion will be to facilitate the exchange of information and of the experience accumulated by different mechanisms in identifying the most productive approaches to the prevention and monitoring of human rights violations of this type.

The possible topics for discussion in the two working groups mentioned above are not meant to be exhaustive. Other issues that can be considered would include the concept of the "child's human dignity" as the crucial standard for school discipline, or the role of criminal law and/or child protective measures in the case of violence against children within the family. But when discussing the various aspects of the two sub-themes of the discussion, the working groups should be guided by the key objectives of the meeting, which will be:

(a) To present, analyse and discuss the nature, extent, causes and consequences of violence against children as described above;

(b) To present and discuss policies and programmes (including legislative and other measures) at the national and international levels to prevent and reduce these types of violence against children;

(c) In particular, to present recommendations focusing on concrete measures which should and could be taken by States parties to reduce and prevent violence against children in these circumstances, including in particular:

(i) The review of relevant legislation; and

(ii) Useful strategies for public information and education campaigns designed to change cultural values and social attitudes that sanction the use of violence against children at school and within the family;

(d) To complement the recommendations adopted by the Committee as a result of the day of general discussion held in September 2000 on "State violence against children" and examine their relevance to the two sub-themes of violence against children at school and within the family.

Participation in the day of general discussion

United Nations programmes and agencies are always invited to participate in the days of general discussion organized by the Committee on the Rights of the Child. Governments are also invited to attend and encouraged to participate actively. The meeting will be open to the public, with information on participation distributed to United Nations programmes and agencies, NGOs and other interested individuals and organizations.

The meeting will be held during the twenty-eighth session of the Committee at the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (Palais Wilson, Geneva) on Friday, 28 September 2001.

The Committee on the Rights of the Child invites written contributions on the issues and topics mentioned, within the framework outlined above. Contributions should be sent before 30 June 2001 (if possible in electronic version) to:

Secretariat, Committee on the Rights of the Child
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, UNOG-OHCHR
CH-1211 Geneva 10
Switzerland
e-mail <mbustelo.hchr@unog.ch> or <ssyed.hchr@unog.ch>

For security reasons, and owing to limited space, participation in the meeting will require registration. Participants should send their full name, organization and contact details (preferably by e-mail) before 14 September 2001, indicating which of the two working groups registered participants intend to attend, to the above address.

Annex IX

GENERAL COMMENT NO. 1 (2001), ARTICLE 29, PARAGRAPH 1: THE AIMS OF EDUCATION

Article 29, paragraph 1, Convention on the Rights of the Child

"States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to:

"(a) The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential;

"(b) The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;

"(c) The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own;

"(d) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin;

"(e) The development of respect for the natural environment."

Appendix

GENERAL COMMENT 1 (2001): THE AIMS OF EDUCATION

The significance of article 29 (1)

1. Article 29, paragraph 1, of the Convention on the rights of the Child is of far-reaching importance. The aims of education that it sets out, which have been agreed to by all States parties, promote, support and protect the core value of the Convention: the human dignity innate in every child and his or her equal and inalienable rights. These aims, set out in the five subparagraphs of article 29 (1), are all linked directly to the realization of the child's human dignity and rights, taking into account the child's special developmental needs and diverse evolving capacities. The aims are: the holistic development of the full potential of the child (29 (1) (a)), including development of respect for human rights (29 (1) (b)), an enhanced sense of identity and affiliation (29 (1) (c)), and his or her socialization and interaction with others (29 (1) (d)) and with the environment (29 (1) (e)).

2. Article 29 (1), not only adds to the right to education recognized in article 28 a qualitative dimension which reflects the rights and inherent dignity of the child; it also insists upon the need for education to be child-centred, child-friendly and empowering and it highlights the need for educational processes to be based upon the very principles it enunciates.[1] The education to which every child has a right is one designed to provide the child with life skills, to strengthen the child's capacity to enjoy the full range of human rights and to promote a culture which is infused by appropriate human rights values. The goal is to empower the child by developing his or her skills, learning and other capacities, human dignity, self-esteem and self-confidence. "Education" in this context goes far beyond formal schooling to embrace the broad range of life experiences and learning processes which enable children, individually and collectively, to develop their personalities, talents and abilities and to live a full and satisfying life within society.

3. The child's right to education is not only a matter of access (art. 28) but also of content. An education with its contents firmly rooted in the values of article 29 (1) is for every child an indispensable tool for her or his efforts to achieve in the course of her or his life a balanced, human rights-friendly response to the challenges that accompany a period of fundamental change driven by globalization, new technologies and related phenomena. Such challenges include the tensions between, inter alia, the global and the local; the individual and the collective; tradition and modernity; long- and short-term considerations; competition and equality of opportunity; the expansion of knowledge and the capacity to assimilate it; and the spiritual and the material.[2] And yet, in the national and international programmes and policies on education that really count, the elements embodied in article 29 (1) seem all too often to be either largely missing or present only as a cosmetic afterthought.

4. Article 29 (1) states that the States parties agree that education should be directed to a wide range of values. This agreement overcomes the boundaries of religion, nation and culture built across many parts of the world. At first sight, some of the diverse values expressed in article 29 (1) might be thought to be in conflict with one another in certain situations. Thus,

efforts to promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all peoples to which paragraph (1) (d) refers, might not always be automatically compatible with policies designed, in accordance with paragraph (1) (c), to develop respect for the child's own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own. But in fact, part of the importance of this provision lies precisely in its recognition of the need for a balanced approach to education and one which succeeds in reconciling diverse values through dialogue and respect for difference. Moreover, children are capable of playing a unique role in bridging many of the differences that have historically separated groups of people from one another.

The functions of article 29 (1)

5. Article 29 (1), is much more than an inventory or listing of different objectives which education should seek to achieve. Within the overall context of the Convention it serves to highlight, inter alia, the following dimensions.

6. First, it emphasizes the indispensable interconnected nature of the Convention's provisions. It draws upon, reinforces, integrates and complements a variety of other provisions and cannot be properly understood in isolation from them. In addition to the general principles of the Convention - non-discrimination (art. 2), the best interest of the child (art. 3), the right to life, survival and development (art. 6) and the right to express views and have them taken into account (art. 12) - many other provisions may be mentioned, such as but not limited to the rights and responsibilities of parents (arts. 5 and 18), freedom of expression (art. 13), freedom of thought (art. 14), the right to information (art. 17), the rights of children with disabilities (art. 23), the right to education for health (art. 24), the right to education (art. 28), and the linguistic and cultural rights of children belonging to minority groups (art. 30).

7. Children's rights are not detached or isolated values devoid of context, but exist within a broader ethical framework which is partly described in article 29 (1) and in the preamble to the Convention. Many of the criticisms that have been made of the Convention are specifically answered by this provision. Thus, for example, this article underlines the importance of respect for parents, of the need to view rights within their broader ethical, moral, spiritual, cultural or social framework, and of the fact that most children's rights, far from being externally imposed, are embedded within the values of local communities.

8. Second, the article attaches importance to the process by which the right to education is to be promoted. Thus, efforts to promote the enjoyment of other rights must not be undermined, and should be reinforced, by the values imparted in the educational process. This includes not only the content of the curriculum but also the educational processes, the pedagogical methods and the environment within which education takes place, whether it be the home, school, or elsewhere. Children do not lose their human rights by virtue of passing through the school gates. Thus, for example, education must be provided in a way that respects the inherent dignity of the child and enables the child to express his or her views freely in accordance with article 12 (1) and to participate in school life. Education must also be provided in a way that respects the strict

limits on discipline reflected in article 28 (2) and promotes non-violence in school. The Committee has repeatedly made clear in its concluding observations that the use of corporal punishment does not respect the inherent dignity of the child nor the strict limits on school discipline. Compliance with the values recognized in article 29 (1) clearly requires that schools be child-friendly in the fullest sense of the term and that they be consistent in all respects with the dignity of the child. The participation of children in school life, the creation of school communities and student councils, peer education and peer counselling, and the involvement of children in school disciplinary proceedings should be promoted as part of the process of learning and experiencing the realization of rights.

9. Third, while article 28 focuses upon the obligations of State parties in relation to the establishment of educational systems and in ensuring access thereto, article 29 (1) underlines the individual and subjective right to a specific quality of education. Consistent with the Convention's emphasis on the importance of acting in the best interests of the child, this article emphasizes the message of child-centred education: that the key goal of education is the development of the individual child's personality, talents and abilities, in recognition of the fact that every child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities, and learning needs.[3] Thus, the curriculum must be of direct relevance to the child's social, cultural, environmental and economic context and to his or her present and future needs and take full account of the child's evolving capacities; teaching methods should be tailored to the different needs of different children. Education must also be aimed at ensuring that essential life skills are learnt by every child and that no child leaves school without being equipped to face the challenges that he or she can expect to be confronted with in life. Basic skills include not only literacy and numeracy but also life skills such as the ability to make well-balanced decisions; to resolve conflicts in a non-violent manner; and to develop a healthy lifestyle, good social relationships and responsibility, critical thinking, creative talents, and other abilities which give children the tools needed to pursue their options in life.

10. Discrimination on the basis of any of the grounds listed in article 2 of the Convention, whether it is overt or hidden, offends the human dignity of the child and is capable of undermining or even destroying the capacity of the child to benefit from educational opportunities. While denying a child's access to educational opportunities is primarily a matter which relates to article 28 of the Convention, there are many ways in which failure to comply with the principles contained in article 29 (1) can have a similar effect. To take an extreme example, gender discrimination can be reinforced by practices such as a curriculum which is inconsistent with the principles of gender equality, by arrangements which limit the benefits girls can obtain from the educational opportunities offered, and by unsafe or unfriendly environments which discourage girls' participation. Discrimination against children with disabilities is also pervasive in many formal educational systems and in a great many informal educational settings, including in the home.[4] Children with HIV/AIDS are also heavily discriminated against in both settings.[5] All such discriminatory practices are in direct contradiction with the requirements in article 29 (1) (a) that education be directed to the development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential.

11. The Committee also wishes to highlight the links between article 29 (1) and the struggle against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. Racism and related phenomena thrive where there is ignorance, unfounded fears of racial, ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic or other forms of difference, the exploitation of prejudices, or the teaching or dissemination of distorted values. A reliable and enduring antidote to all of these failings is the provision of education which promotes an understanding and appreciation of the values reflected in article 29 (1), including respect for differences, and challenges all aspects of discrimination and prejudice. Education should thus be accorded one of the highest priorities in all campaigns against the evils of racism and related phenomena. Emphasis must also be placed upon the importance of teaching about racism as it has been practised historically, and particularly as it manifests or has manifested itself within particular communities. Racist behaviour is not something engaged in only by "others". It is therefore important to focus on the child's own community when teaching human and children's rights and the principle of non-discrimination. Such teaching can effectively contribute to the prevention and elimination of racism, ethnic discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

12. Fourth, article 29 (1) insists upon a holistic approach to education which ensures that the educational opportunities made available reflect an appropriate balance between promoting the physical, mental, spiritual and emotional aspects of education, the intellectual, social and practical dimensions, and the childhood and lifelong aspects. The overall objective of education is to maximize the child's ability and opportunity to participate fully and responsibly in a free society. It should be emphasized that the type of teaching that is focused primarily on accumulation of knowledge, prompting competition and leading to an excessive burden of work on children, may seriously hamper the harmonious development of the child to the fullest potential of his or her abilities and talents. Education should be child-friendly, inspiring and motivating the individual child. Schools should foster a humane atmosphere and allow children to develop according to their evolving capacities.

13. Fifth, it emphasizes the need for education to be designed and provided in such a way that it promotes and reinforces the range of specific ethical values enshrined in the Convention, including education for peace, tolerance, and respect for the natural environment, in an integrated and holistic manner. This may require a multidisciplinary approach. The promotion and reinforcement of the values of article 29 (1) are not only necessary because of problems elsewhere, but must also focus on problems within the child's own community. Education in this regard should take place within the family, but schools and communities must also play an important role. For example, for the development of respect for the natural environment, education must link issues of environment and sustainable development with socio-economic, sociocultural and demographic issues. Similarly, respect for the natural environment should be learnt by children at home, in school and within the community, encompass both national and international problems, and actively involve children in local, regional or global environmental projects.

14. Sixth, it reflects the vital role of appropriate educational opportunities in the promotion of all other human rights and the understanding of their indivisibility. A child's capacity to

participate fully and responsibly in a free society can be impaired or undermined not only by outright denial of access to education but also by a failure to promote an understanding of the values recognized in this article.

Human rights education

15. Article 29 (1) can also be seen as a foundation stone for the various programmes of human rights education called for by the World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna in 1993, and promoted by international agencies. Nevertheless, the rights of the child have not always been given the prominence they require in the context of such activities. Human rights education should provide information on the content of human rights treaties. But children should also learn about human rights by seeing human rights standards implemented in practice, whether at home, in school, or within the community. Human rights education should be a comprehensive, life-long process and start with the reflection of human rights values in the daily life and experiences of children.[6]

16. The values embodied in article 29 (1) are relevant to children living in zones of peace but they are even more important for those living in situations of conflict or emergency. As the Dakar Framework for Action notes, it is important in the context of education systems affected by conflict, natural calamities and instability that educational programmes be conducted in ways that promote mutual understanding, peace and tolerance, and that help to prevent violence and conflict.[7] Education about international humanitarian law also constitutes an important, but all too often neglected, dimension of efforts to give effect to article 29 (1).

Implementation, monitoring and review

17. The aims and values reflected in this article are stated in quite general terms and their implications are potentially very wide-ranging. This seems to have led many States parties to assume that it is unnecessary, or even inappropriate, to ensure that the relevant principles are reflected in legislation or in administrative directives. This assumption is unwarranted. In the absence of any specific formal endorsement in national law or policy, it seems unlikely that the relevant principles are or will be used to genuinely inform educational policies. The Committee therefore calls upon all States parties to take the necessary steps to formally incorporate these principles into their education policies and legislation at all levels.

18. The effective promotion of article 29 (1) requires the fundamental reworking of curricula to include the various aims of education and the systematic revision of textbooks and other teaching materials and technologies, as well as school policies. Approaches which do no more than seek to superimpose the aims and values of the article on the existing system without encouraging any deeper changes are clearly inadequate. The relevant values cannot be effectively integrated into, and thus be rendered consistent with, a broader curriculum unless those who are expected to transmit, promote, teach and, as far as possible, exemplify the values have themselves been convinced of their importance. Pre-service and in-service training schemes which promote the principles reflected in article 29 (1) are thus essential for teachers, educational administrators and others involved in child education. It is also important that the

teaching methods used in schools reflect the spirit and educational philosophy of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the aims of education laid down in article 29 (1).

19. In addition, the school environment itself must thus reflect the freedom and the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin called for in article 29 (1) (b) and (d). A school which allows bullying or other violent and exclusionary practices to occur is not one which meets the requirements of article 29 (1). The term "human rights education" is too often used in a way which greatly oversimplifies its connotations. What is needed, in addition to formal human rights education, is the promotion of values and policies conducive to human rights not only within schools and universities but also within the broader community.

20. In general terms, the various initiatives that States parties are required to take pursuant to their Convention obligations will be insufficiently grounded in the absence of widespread dissemination of the text of the Convention itself in accordance with the provisions of Article 42. This will also facilitate the role of children as promoters and defenders of children's rights in their daily lives. In order to facilitate broader dissemination, States parties should report on the measures they have taken to achieve this objective and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights should develop a comprehensive database of the language versions of the Convention that have been produced.

21. The media, broadly defined, also have a central role to play both in promoting the values and aims reflected in article 29 (1) and in ensuring that their activities do not undermine the efforts of others to promote those objectives. Governments are obligated by the Convention, pursuant to article 17 (a), to take all appropriate steps to "encourage the mass media to disseminate information and material of social and cultural benefit to the child".[8]

22. The Committee calls upon States parties to devote more attention to education as a dynamic process and to devising means by which to measure changes over time in relation to article 29 (1). Every child has the right to receive an education of good quality which in turn requires a focus on the quality of the learning environment, of teaching and learning processes and materials, and of learning outputs. The Committee notes the importance of surveys that may provide an opportunity to assess the progress made, based upon consideration of the views of all actors involved in the process, including children currently in or out of school, teachers and youth leaders, parents, and educational administrators and supervisors. In this respect, the Committee emphasizes the role of national-level monitoring which seeks to ensure that children, parents and teachers can have an input in decisions relevant to education.

23. The Committee calls upon States parties to develop a comprehensive national plan of action to promote and monitor realization of the objectives listed in article 29 (1). If such a plan is drawn up in the larger context of a national action plan for children, a national human rights action plan, or a national human rights education strategy, the Government must ensure that it nonetheless addresses all of the issues dealt with in article 29 (1) and does so from a child-rights perspective. The Committee urges that the United Nations and other international bodies concerned with educational policy and human rights education seek better coordination so as to enhance the effectiveness of the implementation of article 29 (1).

24. The design and implementation of programmes to promote the values reflected in this article should become part of the standard response by Governments to almost all situations in which patterns of human rights violations have occurred. Thus, for example, where major incidents of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance occur which involve those under 18, it can reasonably be presumed that the Government has not done all that it should to promote the values reflected in the Convention generally, and in article 29 (1) in particular. Appropriate additional measures under article 29 (1) should therefore be adopted which include research on and adoption of whatever educational techniques might have a positive impact in achieving the rights recognized in the Convention.

25. States parties should also consider establishing a review procedure which responds to complaints that existing policies or practices are not consistent with article 29 (1). Such review procedures need not necessarily entail the creation of new legal, administrative, or educational bodies. They might also be entrusted to national human rights institutions or to existing administrative bodies. The Committee requests each State party when reporting on this article to identify the genuine possibilities that exist at the national or local level to obtain a review of existing approaches which are claimed to be incompatible with the Convention. Information should be provided as to how such reviews can be initiated and how many such review procedures have been undertaken within the reporting period.

26. In order to better focus the process of examining States parties' reports dealing with article 29 (1), and in accordance with the requirement in article 44 that reports shall indicate factors and difficulties, the Committee requests each State party to provide a detailed indication in its periodic reports of what it considers to be the most important priorities within its jurisdiction which call for a more concerted effort to promote the values reflected in this provision and to outline the programme of activities which it proposes to take over the succeeding five years in order to address the problems identified.

27. The Committee calls upon United Nations bodies and agencies and other competent bodies whose role is underscored in article 45 of the Convention to contribute more actively and systematically to the Committee's work in relation to article 29 (1).

28. Implementation of comprehensive national plans of action to enhance compliance with article 29 (1) will require human and financial resources which should be available to the maximum extent possible, in accordance with article 4. Therefore, the Committee considers that resource constraints cannot provide a justification for a State party's failure to take any, or enough, of the measures that are required. In this context, and in light of the obligations upon States parties to promote and encourage international cooperation both in general terms (arts. 4 and 45 of the Convention) and in relation to education (art. 28 (3)), the Committee urges States parties providing development cooperation to ensure that their programmes are designed so as to take full account of the principles contained in article 29 (1).

Notes

[1] In this regard, the Committee takes note of General Comment No. 13 (1999) of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on the right to education, which deals, inter alia, with the aims of education under article 13 (1) of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The Committee also draws attention to the general guidelines regarding the form and contents of periodic reports to be submitted by States parties under article 44, paragraph 1 (b), of the Convention (CRC/C/58), paras. 112-116.

[2] United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Learning: The Treasure Within*, Report of the International Commission on Education for the 21st Century, 1996, pp. 16-18.

[3] United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education*, 1994, p. viii.

[4] See General Comment No. 5 (1994) of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on persons with disabilities.

[5] See the recommendations adopted by the Committee on the Rights of the Child after its day of general discussion in 1998 on children living in a world with HIV/AIDS (A/55/41, para. 1536).

[6] See General Assembly resolution 49/184 of 23 December 1994 proclaiming the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education.

[7] Education for All: Meeting our Collective Commitments, adopted at the World Education Forum, Dakar, 26-28 April 2000.

[8] The Committee recalls the recommendations in this respect which emerged from its day of general discussion in 1996 on the child and the media (see A/53/41, para. 1396).

Annex X

STATEMENT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD TO THE SECOND SUBSTANTIVE SESSION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE SPECIAL SESSION ON CHILDREN OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Committee on the Rights of the Child has followed with interest the preparatory process for the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Children, which it considers a very important initiative to renew and reinforce the commitment of the international community to the enjoyment by children of their human rights, as enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which 192 States have signed or ratified.

The Committee has considered with interest and appreciation the draft provisional outcome document, "A World Fit for Children", submitted by the Bureau of the Preparatory Committee for the Special Session on Children. It would like to submit the following observations to the attention of the second substantive session of the Preparatory Committee.

When the World Summit on Children took place in 1990, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which covers all the goals adopted by the Summit, had just entered into force (2 September 1990). Since then, the Convention has achieved almost universal ratification. States parties have submitted 202 initial and periodic reports on their implementation of the Convention, of which the Committee on the Rights of the Child has already considered 146. Such reports show that the efforts of the States parties to implement the Convention have explicitly or implicitly contributed to the effort to reach the goals set out in the Plan of Action adopted at the World Summit.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child is considered one of the six fundamental United Nations human rights treaties, and was included as such in the Secretary-General's initiative to strengthen respect for international law which led to an extraordinary number of treaty actions during the Millennium Summit. During that event, over 50 States signed the two Optional Protocols to the Convention adopted by the General Assembly in May 2000, demonstrating once again the extraordinary commitment of the international community to the respect, protection and promotion of the human rights of children.

UNICEF, the United Nations leading body dealing with children, defines its mission as "to advocate for the protection of children's rights, to help meet their basic needs and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential. UNICEF is guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child and strives to establish children's rights as enduring ethical principles and international standards of behaviour towards children. ..."

The draft outcome document reflects and acknowledges the key role that the Convention plays in national and international efforts to improve the situation of children around the world. The Committee on the Rights of the Child appreciates the references to the Convention contained in the current draft. However, the Committee feels that there is a need for a clearer

and more consistent reference to the human rights of children as the basis for the Special Session, one that would call for the entire structure of the discussion, the draft outcome document, and all goals, key outcomes and strategies proposed to be clearly expressed in human rights terms. It notes that dozens of child rights NGOs have also called for human rights to be more clearly the basis for a new international agenda for children. The draft outcome document of the Special Session on Children should provide all States, the various United Nations bodies, agencies and human rights mechanisms, civil society (at the national and international levels), including the media, and parents and children themselves with support and guidance in the implementation of the Convention. That is the best way - to quote the draft - to "build a world where all children enjoy a childhood" (para. 5).

The current draft outcome document alternates sections which clearly acknowledge the role and importance of the Convention (especially in paras. 3, 11, 22-23, 34 (a), 34 (b), 37-38, 49, 51, 96 and 106) with others where the real recognition of the central role of human rights standards is less clear, particularly in terms of the choice of priority issues identified under sections IV and V. The Committee feels that more systematic links between the issues addressed in the draft outcome document and the human rights of children enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child would help to avoid any confusion. They would also avoid the misguided perception that the outcome of the Special Session on Children might call for a parallel and overlapping set of international commitments regarding children, rather than strengthen and reinforce with clear targets the existing commitment to the implementation of the human rights of children.

Concerns have been repeatedly expressed about the proliferation of international treaties, declarations and plans of action entailing separate and sometimes overlapping monitoring and reporting obligations for States and the United Nations. In the light of this concern, it is particularly important to ensure that a new international agenda concerning children will be tightly linked to the implementation of the relevant internationally agreed human rights standards. The Committee welcomes the calls made in the draft outcome document for monitoring efforts to take place at the national level (paras. 89-92). It looks forward to future collaboration with UNICEF and other agencies and NGOs in analysing actions taken to implement the objectives of the agenda, thus facilitating regular reporting by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly (paras. 93-94).

Like others, the Committee finds it somewhat difficult to understand the connections between the draft outcome document sections on goals and targets, tasks, strategies and commitments. The headings and structure of the document could perhaps be revised to ensure clearer distinctions between such concepts, making the agenda's clear targets and key outcomes easier to identify.

The Committee welcomes the importance given in section V.A of the draft outcome document to the principle that all action should be guided by the "best interests of the child". Article 3 is considered one of the general principles that should inspire interpretation of all provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Committee also welcomes the references to the right of children to participate actively in society (in particular the references in

paragraphs 75 and 81), a right enshrined in article 12 and related provisions of the Convention. It would perhaps be desirable to link all general principles of the Convention (including article 2 on non-discrimination and article 6 on the right to life, survival and development) to the entire document, to avoid the impression that their relevance is not equal, or that it is more narrowly linked only to certain tasks or strategies.

The Committee also welcomes the central role given to the right to education in the draft outcome document. It notes the absence of references to human rights education, which is crucial to the enjoyment of the child's right to an education that conforms with the aims set out in article 29 (1) of the Convention, and is indispensable to ensure that children, and all other members of the community, are fully involved in the effort to ensure the realization of their own rights.

The Committee also notes the extensive references found throughout the draft outcome document (especially in paras. 9, 11-14, 23, 35-36, 39, 43, 82, 91 and 100-105) to the importance of economic factors in ensuring the enjoyment by children of their human rights. In spite of such numerous references, the draft outcome document appears to lack a clear and consistent message on the fundamental importance of eliminating (or at least reducing) poverty for the achievement of the goals to be set in this new international agenda for children. The same clear and central message is needed to state the international commitment and solidarity to protect the enjoyment by children of their human rights from any adverse consequences of globalization or from the negative impact of certain macroeconomic policies or budgetary allocation decisions, including in the context of debt-restructuring or international aid efforts.

While welcoming the clear commitment included in the draft outcome document to the realization of the human rights of children and the implementation of the Convention, the Committee notes that many of the proposed goals and targets (para. 37) focus narrowly on the child's right to health and education without sufficient attention given to the child's civil rights and freedoms and to their right to special protection in difficult circumstances.

In this regard, the Committee would like to suggest, in particular, that the international commitment to improving respect and protection for the rights of children in conflict with the law, and those deprived of their liberty, needs to be better reflected in the outcome of the Special Session on Children. Other areas of growing international concern, including the need to protect the rights of child victims of trafficking and prevent such human rights violations, would also need additional attention in the draft outcome document.

The Committee would like to suggest that calls for the universal ratification of the Convention and its two Optional Protocols be complemented by a call for the consideration and withdrawal, when possible, of reservations. In accordance with the 1993 Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, the Committee would suggest that a new subparagraph be added to the draft outcome document, after subparagraph 34 (a), to include amongst the core objectives for the next decade the following:

new (b) Review all reservations lodged to the Convention on the Rights of the Child with a view to withdrawing them, consider limiting the extent of any reservations they lodge to the Convention or its two Optional Protocols, formulate any reservations as precisely and narrowly as possible, and ensure that none is incompatible with the object and purpose of these treaties.

The Committee also suggests that paragraph 7 of the draft outcome document could be revised, and suggests the following formulation:

> We reaffirm the inextricable link between the human rights of children and of all persons. We acknowledge, in particular, that persisting gender discrimination means that the human rights of girls, and of all children, seem often to be impaired by inadequate legal recognition of the human rights of women. We will continue to work to protect the rights of children by protecting all human rights, and by ensuring that there is an end to the inequality, discrimination and violence that women endure.

The Committee on the Rights of the Child expresses to State delegations, United Nations delegations and all involved its best wishes for a successful and productive effort, and looks forward to the outcome of the Second Substantive Session of the Preparatory Committee for the Special Session on Children. The Committee hopes to be able to participate more actively in further preparations for the Special Session, thus helping to ensure that all international efforts to improve the condition of children are based on the international commitment to put human rights at the centre of all United Nations activities.

Annex XI

LIST OF DOCUMENTS ISSUED FOR THE TWENTY-SIXTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE

CRC/C/8/Add.40 and 44	Initial report of the Dominican Republic
CRC/C/11/Add.20	Initial report of Lesotho
CRC/C/11/Add.21	Initial report of Lithuania
CRC/C/11/Add.22	Initial report of Latvia
CRC/C/40/Rev.17	Note by the Secretary-General on areas in which the need for technical advice and advisory services has been identified in the light of the observations adopted by the Committee
CRC/C/51/Add.3	Initial report of Palau
CRC/C/61/Add.1	Initial report of Liechtenstein
CRC/C/61/Add.2	Initial report of Saudi Arabia
CRC/C/65/Add.9	Second periodic report of Egypt
CRC/C/70/Add.7	Second periodic report of Ethiopia
CRC/C/101	Provisional agenda and annotations
CRC/C/102	Note by the Secretary-General on the States parties to the Convention and the status of submission of reports
CRC/C/SR.670-697	Summary records of the twenty-sixth session.